

CINEFANTASTIQUE

February 1992

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silence of the lambs

FILMING THE HORROR MASTERPIECE

STEPHEN KING
How Hollywood embraces
horror's brand name

ROBOCOP 3
The would-be franchise
installs a new RoboActor

THE NAKED LUNCH
Horror auteur David Cronenberg on William Burroughs

Volume 22 Number 4



DOLLMAN

Thirteen inches...with an attitude



COMING ON VIDEOCASSETTE
IN NOVEMBER 1991

FULL MOON ENTERTAINMENT Presents An ALBERT PYUN Film "DOLLMAN"

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From an Original Idea by CHARLES BAND Production Design DON DAY Edited By MARGARET ANNE SMITH

Executive Producer CHARLES BAND Screenplay by CHRIS ROGHAI

Produced by CATHY GESUALDO Directed by ALBERT PYUN



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VOLUME 22 NUMBER 4

The magazine with a "Sense of Wonder."

FEBRUARY, 1992

It's been our priority since *SILENCE OF THE LAMBS* jolted audiences last February to devote a cover to the behind-the-scenes story of filming the Thomas H. Harris bestseller. And now that the movie is out on video, at least we won't be spoiling the film's surprises for many readers. In fact, after reading the coverage we've assembled, you'll probably have the urge to spend another evening with Hannibal Lector.

New York writer Dan Persons talked to director Jonathan Demme, production designer Kristi Zea, cinematographer Tak Fujimoto, makeup artists Carl Fullerton and Neal Martz, and Demme mentor Roger Corman. What emerges is a picture of Demme as a consummate filmmaker who understands and appreciates the horror genre. What also emerges is a clear picture of filmmaking as a collaborative art, an approach stressed by the self-effacing Demme, who generously credits the contributions of others.

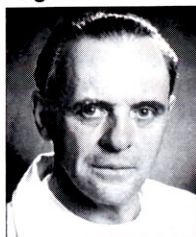
Demme is a shy, soft-spoken, gentle man whose nature at first seems at odds with the grisly horror involved in the bestseller's tale of a serial killer. Though reticent at first, Demme proved to be an impassioned speaker on the subject of filmmaking and his low-key approach to horror, during an appearance at Chicago's Illinois Artists Film and Video Festival last June. Demme has been criticized unfairly for glorifying serial killers and insulting gays with his work on the film, and his comments at the festival, reported here, eloquently answered his detractors.

Also part of our coverage is a sampling of the film's design work, supervised by Zea, made available as part of the collection of New York's American Museum of the Moving Image. Glimpsed in the voluminous graphic Grand Guignol sketches prepared for Demme to aid in deciding what and what not to show, is the tortuous process of walking a fine line between entertainment and obscenity. Demme's unerring judgement resulted in an instant horror classic that ranks in impact with Hitchcock's *PSYCHO*.

Frederick S. Clarke



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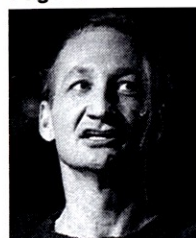
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STEPHEN KING STRIKES AGAIN!

Hollywood competes for a share of the King horror franchise.

By Gary L. Wood

There is a Stephen King maelstrom wreaking havoc from Maine to Hollywood, with no sign of letting up. Completed filming and awaiting release are George Romero's version of King's *The Dark Half* for Orion; SLEEPWALKERS, an original King script directed by Mick Garris for Columbia; CHILDREN OF THE CORN 2, a sequel to the 1984 New World Pictures low-budgeter, filmed by TransAtlantic Pictures in North Carolina, and THE LAWNMOWER MAN, a feature version of King's *Night Shift* tale which New Line Cinema opens in February.

One insider peddling King film rights in Hollywood said there is a record interest in King's work on the heels of the boxoffice success of Rob Reiner's MISERY and the ratings success of television's IT. The film rights to King's latest novel, *Needful Things*, were snapped up by Reiner's Castle Rock Entertainment prior to publication in September, when the book was still in galley form. And Konigsberg/Sanitsky, the production company which originally developed IT for television, is preparing to film King's *The Tommyknockers* as another miniseries for ABC. Noted *Publisher's Weekly* about King's enhanced status in Hollywood, "Prices obtained for King by Bill Haber and Rand Holston at CAA are said to be way up there—that for *The Tommy-*

knockers possibly setting a record for television, with *Needful Things* bringing a reported \$1.750 million."

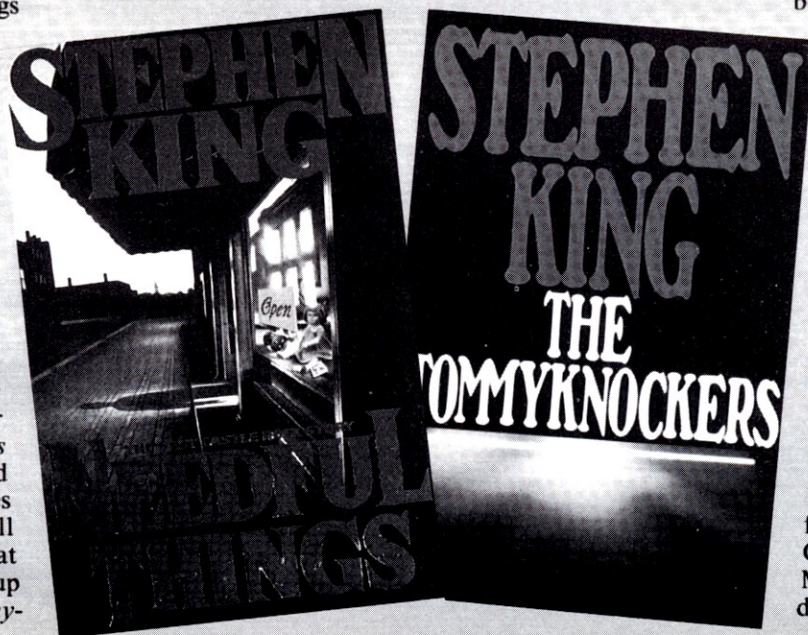
"We bought [*Needful Things*] pretty much immediately upon reading it," said Castle Rock production chief Martin Shafer. "We liked the book very much as an entertaining version of the classic struggle between good and evil. We thought it had a wonderful villain, Leland."

Leland Gaunt is the owner of the book's eponymous curio shop "Needful Things," the source of the tale's horror. Blurbs the dust jacket, "Gaunt knows almost everything is for sale: love, hope, even the human soul." As the novel's cover boasts, the book is King's "Last Castle Rock

Story," referring to the setting of the fictional Maine town that has served as the locus for most of King's writing. Trumpets the dust jacket, "With a demonic blend of malice and affection, Stephen King says goodbye to the town he put on the map." Screenwriter Lawrence D. Cohen, hired by Castle Rock to script NEEDFUL THINGS, noted the "great coincidence" that the film company which bought the book had taken the town as its name after the success of filming King's *Stand By Me*, also set in "The Rock."

At the American Booksellers convention in New York, King commented on the prospects for the film by noting, "The smartest thing Rob [Reiner] did was hire Larry Cohen to

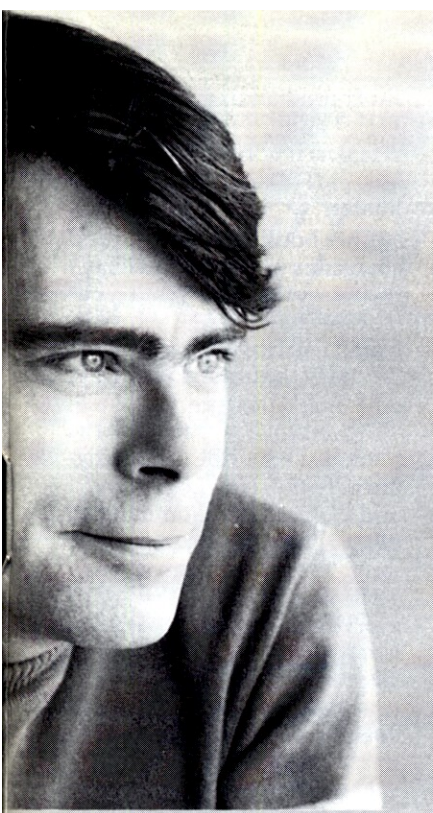
In development, the author's latest bestseller (left), with movie rights snapped up by Rob Reiner's Castle Rock Entertainment, and King's unusual foray into science fiction (right), being readied as a TV mini-series for ABC by the producers of IT.



King, awash in movie deals thanks to the boxoffice success of MISERY and the smash ratings of IT on ABC-TV.

write the script." Cohen wrote the scripts for CARRIE (1976)—including its failed Broadway adaptation in 1988—and IT (1990). In addition to writing NEEDFUL THINGS for Castle Rock, Cohen has been hired by Konigsberg/Sanitsky to script THE TOMMYKNOCKERS as well as co-produce. "I think it's got the makings of something special," said Cohen. "It's the one that's been on Steve's shelf that hasn't been done. It's a departure, it's science fiction." Cohen said he's not afraid of being typed as "King's screenwriter." Noted Cohen, "The two books are extremely different. Each has a distinct identity."

THE TOMMYKNOCKERS revolves around a young woman's discovery of a buried spaceship in the forest behind her house. In unearthing the ship, the woman and her friends set free the beings of the title. Cohen is adapting the book to air in four hours over two nights, focusing on the love story between Gard and Bobbi, among the book's large cast of characters. To film in Canada or northern California, doubling for King's Maine, the miniseries will air during the November sweeps



in 1992, the same strategy behind IT's ratings success for ABC.

In the process of scripting THE TOMMYKNOCKERS, Cohen broke down the book, providing the network with an extended beat-by-beat outline for both nights of the miniseries. "It's one of [Steve's] more interesting [stories]," said Cohen. "It's a very *different* adaptation than a lot of Steve's pieces, meaning that the first 200 pages or so of the book are very contained and really only feature two characters. Then you sort of leave for an extended, several-hundred-page run and meet all the other people who live in this town. So it's basically been taking the dozens of pieces of this jigsaw puzzle, and throwing them up in the air and having them come down in a very integrated structure."

Cohen termed NEEDFUL THINGS, "Our Town with teeth!" By enticing the denizens of Castle Rock with the curios at his shop, Gaunt weaves his dark magic through the town, pitting neighbor against neighbor in what King termed an "hilarious" story. "It's black humor needless to say," said Cohen. "It's the humor of MISERY. It's a fantastic book, an extraordinary piece." Shafer said Reiner is about to direct another project, A FEW GOOD MEN, and has no plans to

STEPHEN KING'S

THE DARK HALF

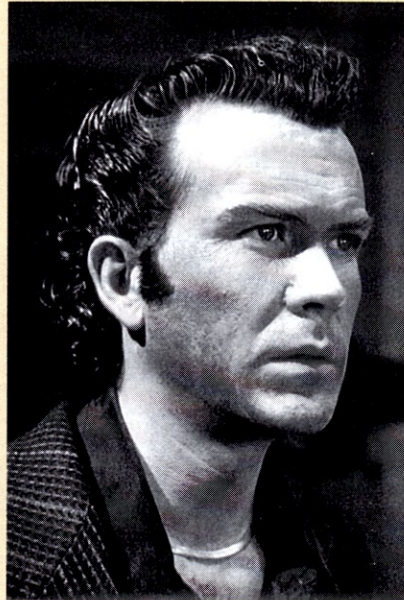
Horror meister George Romero has finished King's Jekyll & Hyde shocker for Orion.

*By Charles
D. Leayman*

The most eagerly anticipated film among Stephen King fans is George Romero's THE DARK HALF, a \$10 million-plus adaptation for Orion Pictures of King's typically phenomenal best seller. Romero completed effects reshooting last September after audience previews, readying a final cut of the film for Orion's anticipated release in 1992.

The production marks Romero's debut stint as director on a major company release. Romero maintained the reasonably strict control he is accustomed to by shooting the film at his hometown base of Pittsburgh, where he established his initial success with NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD in 1968. Working from his own screenplay, Romero crafted King's 484-page thriller into a tautly streamlined condensation that deftly distills the Jekyll/Hyde narrative's grisly essence.

THE DARK HALF is a sort of autobiographical *roman a clef*, with the fictional Thad Beaumont and his diabolical *doppelganger* George Stark, both played by ORDINARY PEOPLE star Timothy Hutton, standing in for King and his pseudonymous, far less aggressive alter ego, "Richard Bachman." In the book, Beaumont is an English teacher who sustains his livelihood and "serious" writing by grinding out flamboyantly lurid thrillers under the Stark byline. Finally dismayed by his too-easy success as a glorified hack, Beaumont decides to lay his penname to rest, going so far as to



Timothy Hutton as King's evil Thad Stark, shedding his Oscar-winning good guy image.

stage a mock-funeral for the benefit of *People* magazine. But "George Stark" has managed to take on a malevolent life of his own and obstinately refuses to stay dead. His steadily rotting form slaughters its way EC-fashion through all those who contributed to Stark's demise, working his way back to a final confrontation with his creator, whose life energies he intends to claim for his own.

Thanks to Orion's backing, Romero has selected his most stellar cast to date. The intriguing choice of Hutton to portray the Janus-faced protagonist enables the actor to break the mold of "vulnerably sensitive young man" brought to perfection with his Academy Award-winning performance in ORDINARY PEOPLE (1980). As the demonic Stark, Hutton too is artfully disclosing the repressed underside of all those dreamy idealists he so

winningly embodied in films like ICEMAN and FALCON AND THE SNOWMAN.

As Thad's wife Liz, Romero cast Amy Madigan (FIELD OF DREAMS, UNCLE BUCK). Madigan is married to Ed Harris, who worked with Romero on KNIGHTRIDERS and CREEPSHOW. Michael Rooker, as fabled Castle Rock's Sheriff Pangborn, is best remembered for his own sobering Stark-turn as the title terror in HENRY: PORTRAIT OF A SERIAL KILLER. Also in the cast is Julie Harris (THE HAUNTING) as a tweedy pipe-smoking authority on the occult who comes to the aid of Beaumont.

King gives his personal anxieties as writer, celebrity, husband and father a therapeutic airing in *The Dark Half*, embodying the figure of Stark with all the murderous ambivalence that once wracked Jack Torrance during a winter at the Overlook Hotel in *The Shining*. But if Torrance was a grandiose verison of your garden variety domestic psycho, Stark is a creature spawned from comic books, pulp paperbacks and hackle-raisers like Romero's own movies.

Stark's gradually disintegrating appearance lends a funny, ghoulish, oddly poignant quality to King's imaginative meditation on his own "stark" impulses. As is usual with this author at his best, *The Dark Half* interweaves pop culture hipness, psychological wit, excruciating detail and drop-dead storytelling into a fictional dynamo. And Romero is just the writer/director to do it justice. □

STEPHEN KING'S SLEEPWALKERS

King's first original screenplay is a bloody tale of humanoid/feline shapeshifting.

By Gary L. Wood

Immortal shape-changers that must feed on the "life-force" of humans are the subject of Stephen King's first original screenplay titled *SLEEPWALKERS*. The shape shifters, feline/humanoid creatures who take the form of humans to blend into society while they pick their prey, take their name from the song "Sleep Walk" by Santo and Johnny. Columbia Pictures tentatively plans to open their entry in the King horror sweepstakes in May.

The Sleepwalkers must stay on the run, settling down only long enough to set up a household, blend into a small town, and feast on a few locals. Within days, local cats, household and strays, sense the Sleepwalkers, their natural enemy, and surround the house. To prevent this, the Sleepwalkers set traps around their base to keep the cats at bay, a perverse, supernatural, suburban war—King-style. In the end, the Sleepwalkers must move on as the town becomes aware.

King's script has generated a lot of negative buzz in Hollywood. The strengths of the tale, however, are what make it uniquely King. It opens with a Trans Am fleeing a deserted house with many cats in pursuit. We meet Charles, the 18-year-old owner of the Trans Am, who, with his mother Mary (Alice Krige of *GHOST STORY*), has moved to the small town of Travis, Indiana. King lets us know that something is not quite right with the mother and son early on when they are shown making love. As the story progresses, it's



Remember Alice Krige from 1981's *GHOST STORY*? Now she's the sleek cat-like creature who devours human flesh in *SLEEPWALKERS*.

revealed that Charles and Mary are actually Sleepwalkers.

King's script tries to sell Charles and Mary as sympathetic characters until it is shown how brutal they are midway through. Then King shifts to the point-of-view of the townspeople and Tanya, the girl Charles is stalking to bring home to mom for dinner, as they begin their battle against the Sleepwalkers. The script's unusual structure and its graphic nature—not to mention that the hero is a cat—have prompted the negative buzz surrounding the project.

The script, however, does exactly what King does best in his novels and short stories. King promises an enjoyable ride and delivers, and he pulls no punches. In *SLEEPWALKERS*, Charles attempts to abduct Tanya midway through the film. As a result, Charles is nearly killed, physically ravaged, and on the run from the

police, a bold plot move which leaves the story's main character with nowhere to turn.

Charles' shape-shifting nature has proven a challenge for the film's makeup effects crew, Tony Gardner's Alterian Studios, the creators of *DARKMAN*. As described by King, the Sleepwalkers are "horribly beautiful, an evolution that may have begun with a cat but developed in an entirely different direction. Hairless, sleek..."

Gardner's group is also responsible for realizing King's ultra-violence: a cop with a pencil thrust through the ear; two other cops with their heads mulched together in a spray of blood; a woman tossed through a window; a man assaulted with a vase; another man's arm twisted three times—once to break it, again to break the man's shoulder, and a third time to snap his neck. Spray bottles of special effects blood were used to rain over some scenes. Noted Gardner, "I think this is probably the bloodiest film I've worked on."

The Sleepwalkers also have the ability to transform their surroundings at will. Charles can change his car from a late-model Trans Am to a classic 1966 Mustang to avoid police detection. Mary can hold her dying son within their temporary home and all its well-intended trappings and make themselves invisible.

Apogee Effects are providing optical and computer animation for the film's transformation scenes, tied to Gardner's designs for the various live-action makeup stages, filmed with suits and masks. □

either produce or direct *NEEDFUL THINGS* for Castle Rock. "He'll be involved to the extent he is part of the company," said Shafer.

The book features several characters who appear in King's earlier works. The "punk-you-love-to hate," Ace Merrill, from "The Body" (aka *STAND BY ME*) returns. Even Cujo makes a guest appearance. "The main character in the book is the sheriff, Alan Pangborn from *The Dark Half*," said Cohen. "It's a summing up of all King's had to say—in the same way that I think *It* was a summing-up in its way of everything he had to say for horror—a summing up of what he has to say about small towns as a microcosm of this country and what's happening to it."

Cohen's daunting task is to distill King's mammoth book into a two-hour movie. "It's a very long book," said Cohen. "It's probably 700 pages with literally dozens of characters. Many of them combined in terms of functions. It's come down to being about the sheriff of the town, who's the male hero of the piece, a woman named Polly Chalmers, who owns a shop in the town and is Alan's love interest, and a ten-year-old boy. Those are the focal points. All the other characters are there, but they are subordinate."

Other projects still bubbling in King's Hollywood pot are the properties controlled by New York-based Laurel Productions, the company behind King's summer replacement TV series *THE GOLDEN YEARS*, which turned out to be a ratings disappointment for CBS despite good reviews and a strong initial viewership. Laurel's King projects include *THINNER*, to be directed by Tom (FRIGHT NIGHT) Holland from a script by Michael McDowell for Warner Bros. Warners has put Laurel's *THE STAND* in turnaround, however. King's epic, scripted by frequent John Boorman collaborator Rospo Pallenberg is "currently looking for a new home," said Laurel chief Richard Rubinstein. Other Laurel-King projects include *NIGHT FLYER*, a TV movie, and *CREEPSHOW 3*. □

STEPHEN KING

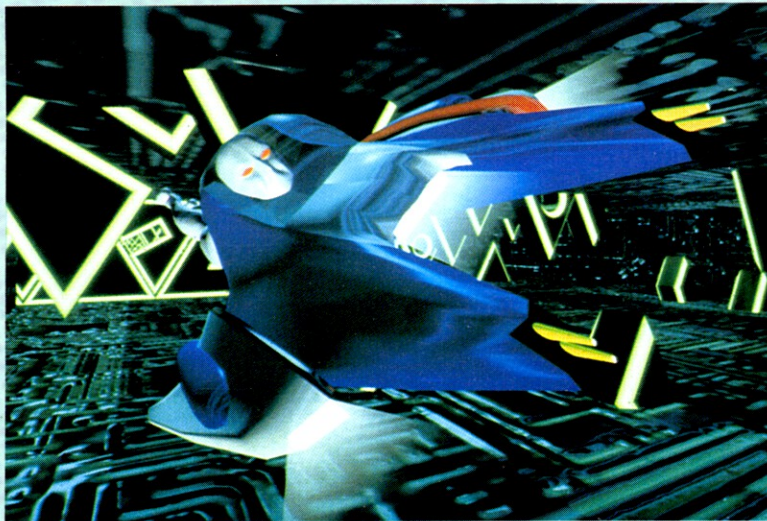
THE LAWNMOWER MAN

And now for something different—King's story wedded to the computer graphics razzle-dazzle of TRON.

By Gary L. Wood

"When you hear the title THE LAWNMOWER MAN, you don't think it's going to be about virtual reality," said director Brett Leonard. With his writing partner Gimel Everett, Leonard turned the brief story from Stephen King's *Night Shift* collection into a full-length feature film with the computer graphics razzle-dazzle of TRON. Though it is not a new phenomenon in King-to-film adaptations, Leonard and Everett used a radical adaptation device: total departure from the original material. The title page of the script admits the film is only, "Suggested by a short story by Stephen King." New Line Cinema opens THE LAWNMOWER MAN, an Allied/Lane/Pringle Production, starring Jeff Fahey in the title role, in February.

King's story is very much in the vein of the old EC comics that so much influenced King and his colleagues. Harold Parkette lets his lawn go until it is overgrown. He calls Pastoral Greenery and Outdoor



Jeff Fahey as part-human, part-futuristic machine, computer graphics by Angel Studios, racing through Dagger World in Cyberboogie, a mind-expanding virtual reality game.

Services to cut down the forest which was once his lawn. Pastoral sends the Lawnmower Man who proceeds to use unique methods to bring the lawn under control. He then demands a sacrifice to his boss, Pan. In Veg-o-matic fashion, the Lawnmower Man and his Big Red lawnmower leave Parkette sitting—in various pieces—in the bird bath to be discovered by the police. His lawn, though, looks great!

When Leonard was asked to develop THE LAWNMOWER MAN as a feature, he hit upon the idea of fusing it with his existing script, CYBERGOD, a virtual reality riff on Daniel Keyes *Flowers for Algernon*, filmed in 1968 with Cliff Robertson as CHARLY. Fahey plays the dim-witted ward of the local church in a small New England town—he mows lawns for a living—who becomes the guinea pig of a virtual reality researcher played by Pierce Brosnan (NOMADS).

But what will King fans say about this warped translation of King's work? "The screenplay is expanded from the short story," maintained Leonard. "There is one scene in the film which is the short story. Those coming to see the short story put on film will see it, but the entire context of it has been changed because you couldn't make a film out of 'The Lawnmower Man' the way it is written as a short story.

"I'm a complete Stephen King fan, fanatic, and love all

his work. What we tried to do is make this something that would fit into his style of work. We set it against a small New England backdrop and have a lot of Kingisms. But it is about something quite new and unique, virtual reality." Some of the Kingisms to watch for are the presence of the evil government agency known as The Shop (also ever-present in THE GOLDEN YEARS), the Parkette family, including the abusive Harold, who is killed by Fahey's Big Red lawnmower, and more.

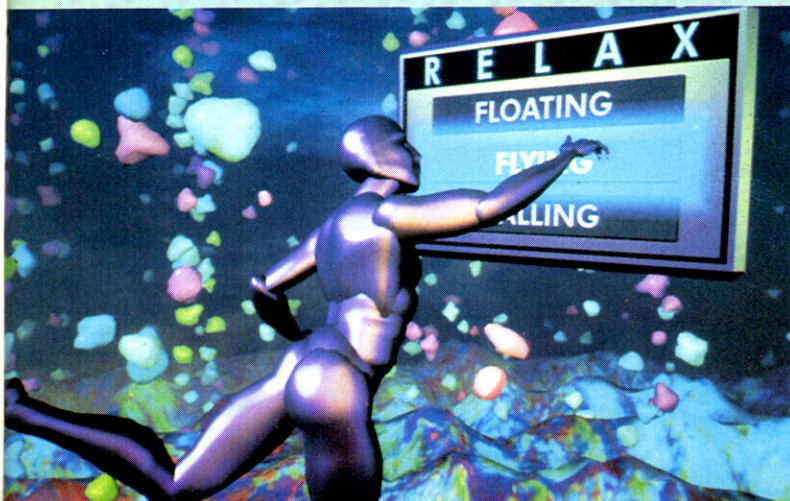
"My hope for this is that I get to meet Stephen King, and that he enjoys the film," laughed Leonard. "I'm a tremendous fan of his. I just think he's unbelievably imaginative and I think if he would write a

continued on page 60

Jeff Fahey as Cybergod, UV lighting effects by Wildfire, a handyman made all-powerful by a scientific experiment.



Relaxation programming—imagine plugging into a virtual reality instead of your compact disc or VCR—computer graphics by San Diego-based Angel Studios.



ROBOCOP

A new face in the Robosuit continues the

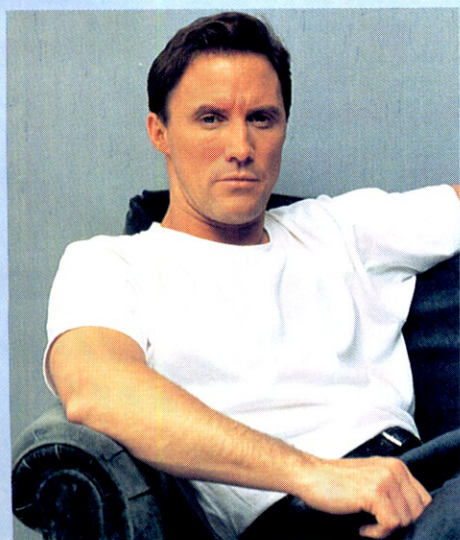
By Dan Persons

There were precedents, of course: Sean Connery became George Lazenby became Roger Moore became Timothy Dalton; Boris Karloff became Lon Chaney Jr. became Christopher Lee became Peter Boyle. Still, there's always some trepidation when one actor tries his hand at a role developed and established by another. Even when the character in question seems defined mostly by an eighty-plus-pound, rubber and plastic costume, the question remains: can the newcomer pick up where the trailblazer left off?

That was the question that actor Robert Burke faced as he took on the role of Alex Murphy—the near-future Detroit policeman turned reluctant law-enforcement cyborg—in *ROBOCOP 3* (due to hit theatre screens early in 1992). It was no easy task: as producer Patrick Crowley, director Fred Dekker, and a financially strapped Orion Pictures struggled to steer the series in a new direction (one that, in Dekker's estimation, would turn Robo into Orion's own James Bond-like franchise), the actor was confronted with the daunting challenge of not only remaining faithful to the character created by Peter Weller, but also of taking it in directions its originator could never have dreamed.

A relative newcomer to feature films, Burke does bear a passing resemblance to

Robert Burke, the new Robo, mime and actor.



Robert Burke as Robo with (l to r) Daniel Von Barga as Morena, Robert DoQui as Sgt. Reed, Remy Ryan as Nikko, Jill Hennessy as Marie and Stanley Anderson as Zack, filming *ROBOCOP 3* on location in Atlanta.

Weller (slightly less angular face, eyes not quite as ice-blue). While talking about his work during a break in the film's Atlanta, Georgia-based shooting schedule last March, Burke acknowledged that more than a little of his portrayal will come from the imagery established by his predecessor.

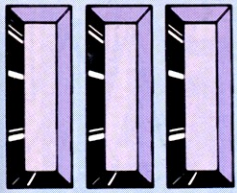
"[Weller] did a very definite job I think," said Burke. "It was really brilliant that he did it to begin with—this was really unknown territory for an actor. He was a stage actor with a good reputation, and here he comes—obviously after *BUCKAROO BANZAI*—but he's really throwing himself into this arena of the unknown. I often think of that: that he had a lot of courage to do it, and then to do it as well as he did. What I try to carry on is what I think Peter established as far as his passion for this guy. When someone says to RoboCop, 'Hey, Murphy . . . ' there's this crisis that automatically kicks in. It's an immediate conflict, and it's so juicy for an actor. He established that—I'm trying to hold the line."

In truth the opportunity to don the RoboSuit came quite unbidden by Burke, following his return to acting after an extended hiatus away from the art. "I had

been training as an actor since my senior year in high school," said Burke. "I'd had an internship, and I'd toured the country with an acting program doing close to twelve hundred performances of two shows. Then I went from college to college to college until I wound up at Purchase, which is a conservatory of the New York State University system.

"In my senior year my Dad passed away and that took the wind out of my sails, mentally, physically, spiritually. He passed away at the same time I was doing the lead in a production of Gorky's *The Lower Depths*, which deals with death and dying. I thought it would be a good idea to take six months off. It turned out to be six years." In the interim, Burke became involved in a learning enhancement program developed by the New York State Board of Education, and followed that with a career in carpentry.

It was his friend, Hal Hartley, who brought Burke back to acting. Having received \$200,000 to lens a full-length, 35mm feature, Hartley asked Burke if he'd be interested in taking one of the lead roles. Seeing the film as a good, low-pressure way of re-entering the field, Burke joined



action saga.

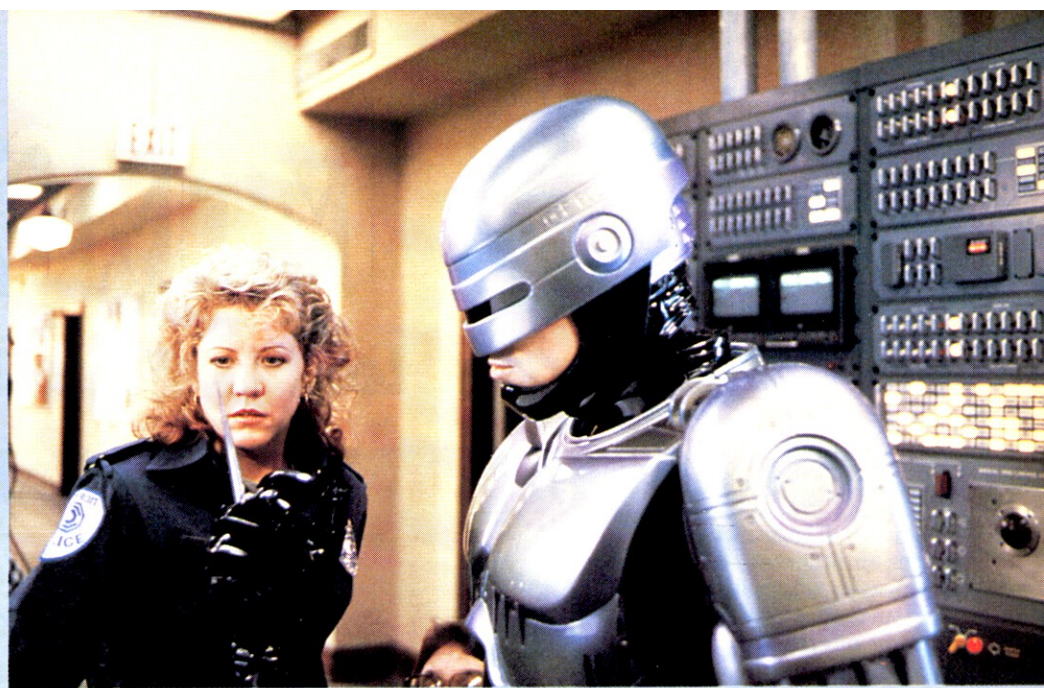
the cast of *THE UNBELIEVABLE TRUTH*, then afterward went back to his carpentry, little realizing that he had planted the seeds for his eventual Robofication.

The film was eventually purchased by Miramax, and toured film festivals around the country. Among those attending screenings were Crowley and Dekker, who noted Burke's performance, and requested that the actor come in and audition for the role of their new Murphy. It was not a summons that Burke was eager to receive.

"When I first heard they were interested, I passed," recalled Burke. "I said, 'What else is going on this week?' And they said, 'No, Bob, they want to fly you out and test you and everything.' I had not seen *ROBOCOP 1* or *2*. I had heard about it through my nephews. I kind of knew conceptually what it was about. Honestly, all I thought was maybe I could read this small scene for them. Then we drove up to Azusa to see Rob Bottin and try the suit on—it fit pretty well. I had some mime training, so I started to kid around and move around in the suit a little.

"I remember flying home and walking in the door and telling my wife, 'Oh no, I think I got it.'"

Burke's suspicions were confirmed when a phone call came from Orion the



Robert Burke as Officer Murphy—RoboCop—with Nancy Allen as Lewis, back in the role of Robo's sidekick.

very day he was to leave to begin work on another film, *RAMBLING ROSE*. "Sit down, Robo," Burke recalled the voice saying, "We got news for ya."

While his casting came as something of a shock, no one argues that the actor doesn't come well-prepared for the role, both physically and professionally. In addition to his work on the stage and before cameras, Burke is an experienced mime, and has had extensive training in karate. In addition, the producers have once again brought in New York stage director Moni Yakim to help the actor develop the thought patterns and mechanized movements that will successfully evoke the soul of movie's newest machine. With all these disciplines to choose from, Burke claims he finds his martial arts training especially useful for the role. "There's a sensitivity to karate," he said. "There's a beauty in it. In Robo, obviously, there are very strong movements, powerful movements, big

turns. But there's also a quality of softness and sensitivity.

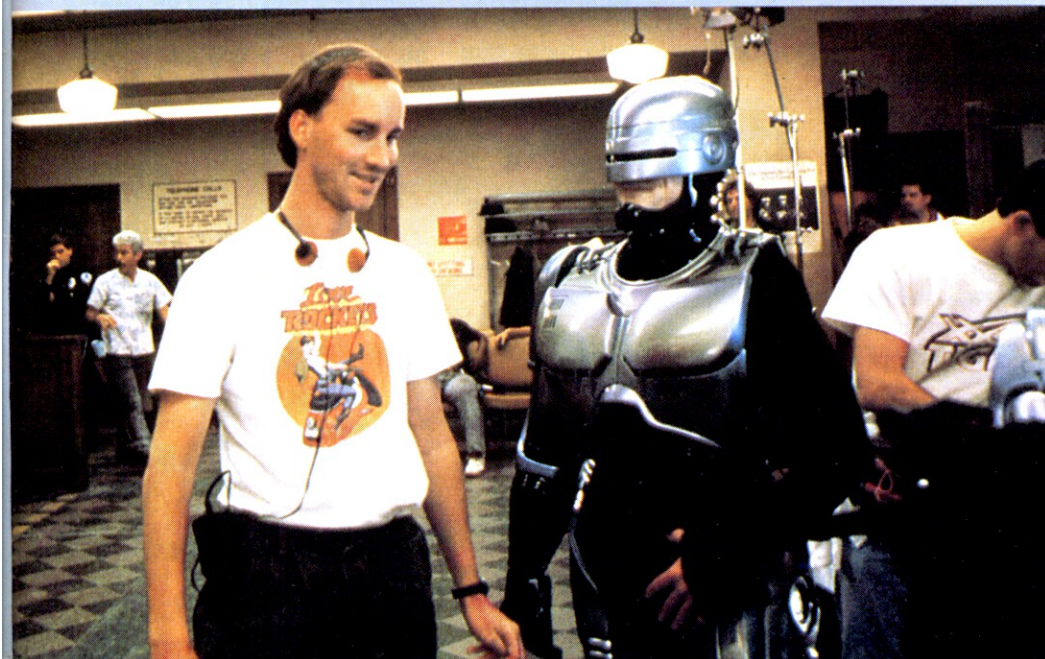
"I don't know what Peter's experience was, but this is really a place where the karate comes in. You have the needle, and it could be from fear of getting charred alive in a shot, or from thinking 'I'm a powerful, fuckin' robot!' In karate, we do kata, which is a series of prearranged, combative movements. There's no time for adjustment, when Sensei says to begin, you can't be picking your nose or going, 'Well, what did you . . . ?' or 'Cut!' You go. You go and when you think you're mistaken you *keep* going. You never stop. That's been good for me in terms of all the things I have to think about when I'm in that costume. Where I try to keep it is what the Japanese call *mushin*, which means 'no mind.' You empty your head—you know you have to look here, fire here, turn here, fire here. You know you're going to get shots in your chest and the door's going to blow up. Best thing to do is to rehearse it and, once the camera rolls, empty your head."

So, with the demands of the character neatly dovetailing into his acquired disciplines, does Burke find Alex Murphy becoming a commanding presence in his life? "He's not in my dreams yet," said Burke. "There is a visor-like quality to my dreams, but I haven't come out of my body yet. It's strange, though. At the end of the day I can go into a restaurant and feel like I still have the suit on. Someone will say, 'Oh, your table will be ready in ten minutes,' and I'll . . ." Falling silent, he imitated the machine-like demeanor of RoboCop as servos swung a cold, appraising glance toward the waiter.

He then switched roles, duplicating the stunned look of the human: "Uhhhh, make that *five* minutes."

Dropping the reenactment, Burke shrugged. "I've come to terms with it." □

Director Fred Dekker rehearses with Burke as he suits up with effects expert Rob Bottin's plastic armor.



MEMOIRS OF AN

John Carpenter on directing Chevy Chase

By Steve
Biodrowski

Studio filmmaking offers an inherent compromise in which directors surrender a certain amount of creative control in exchange for bigger budgets, better facilities, and wider distribution. Sometimes, the exchange pays off better than others, and some directors are less successful at making the transition from independent production. For example, despite some fine work, John Carpenter's studio films have never matched the success and promise of his early indie hits, *ESCAPE FROM NEW YORK* and *HALLOWEEN*. It was as if the studio system impaired the vision and style that had infused the earlier work, to the extent that Carpenter retreated to a four-picture contract with Alive Films, which granted him complete control in exchange for working within \$3 million budgets on *PRINCE OF DARKNESS* and *THEY LIVE*. Now, halfway through his Alive contract, why has the director taken another shot at a major studio production, *MEMOIRS OF AN INVISIBLE MAN*? "The story came along, and I thought, 'This is really interesting—it would have a different feel to it,'" said Carpenter.

Warner Bros was set to open the film December 13, against stiff competition like Steven Spielberg's *HOOK* and *STAR TREK VI: THE UNDISCOVERED COUNTRY*. "It reminded me a little of *STARMAN*," said Carpenter of his reasons for returning to big budgets. "There's suspense, there's romance, and there's comedy. The comedy parts are extremely



The invisible man like you've never seen him before, via ILM's Computer Graphics Imaging.

funny, and it's funny all the way through—lighter or heavier, depending on where we are—and sometimes you're thrown into a suspenseful sequence which has humorous moments. The film moves through different adventures and places. Each location presents a new visual challenge, and every single day there's something new we have to deal with. But first and foremost, the film has to work dramatically; otherwise, it doesn't matter what I pour into it—there's not enough money to make it work."

Making the story work may be uppermost on Carpenter's mind, but a substantial portion of the film's \$40 million budget will be poured into making star Chevy Chase seem to be invisible. John P. Fulton's 1933 special effects for the original version of *THE INVISIBLE MAN* hold up well today, but there were certain limitations when it came to having Claude Rains interact with on-set props and other actors. Today,

they couldn't do even as recently as a year ago—the special effects technology is much more refined."

Added Carpenter, "You've seen invisible man movies, and you know what they're all about, so what we have to do in as many cases as we can is upgrade the invisibility and put it on the Panavision screen in color. In the John Fulton *INVISIBLE MAN* movies, the original one being the best, they shot him against black velvet and superimposed him on the set. If you watch the old *INVISIBLE MAN* films, you never see the back of his collar except for one quick cut. ILM has come up with a digital process that removes a figure and puts in the back of the clothes to such an extent that it's pretty stunning. We actually shoot the visible portion of the man on set—the same lighting is on him, and he interacts with the background. That will be different."

Another major challenge fell to production designer Lawrence G. Paull, who had to create a set on which Chase, as

with motion-control photography and the same sort of digital technology that shaped *TERMINATOR 2*'s T-1000, Industrial Light and Magic will be able to overcome those old limitations. "We've seen invisibility before but not on the scale or the scope and detail that you're going to see here," claimed producer Bruce Bodner. "There are a lot of things they can do today that

If only James Whale had CGI, he too could have done headbands and sweatbands.



INVISIBLE MAN

and ILM's digital computer effects magic.

Nick Halloway, wakes after a scientific accident to find himself and half the building invisible. To the difficulty of finding a convincing look for the set was added the pressure to shoot the sequence quickly so that another major production could move into the stage on the Warner Bros lot. "That was a major design challenge," said Carpenter. "You can't have too much of the building invisible, because the audience wouldn't know what they were looking at. The question is: How far do you go with it? What do you make it look like? Do you put animation in it to make it look not quite invisible? We chose a sort of Salvador Dali look that's very weird and effective. If you took a giant chainsaw and sawed off parts of this building, that's what it looks like, on a mammoth scale. We built a five story set. The character wakes up and doesn't realize he's invisible, and you have characters outside looking in and seeing only a hat or a chair moving around. It was a technical and dramatic challenge.

"Additionally, we were under pressure from the studio to finish up with the set and move out, so that **BATMAN II** could build Gotham City. It was not an easy shoot. We had to move very quickly and efficiently. We got everything we needed and got out on time—we were good boys."

Despite studio pressure, the director received high marks from his star for being able to keep a handle on the large-scale production. "Carpenter's great," Chase enthused. "He's totally focused, and he understands technically what's needed. He's concentrated on seeing to it that what is needed to be known about making this picture is at his fingertips, so that it is on time and on budget. A lesser director would be

"You've seen invisible man movies before," said Carpenter, "but ILM has come up with a digital process that removes a figure to such an extent that it's pretty stunning."



Chevy Chase as the visible man, with girlfriend Daryl Hannah, in an effects-laden romantic comedy Warner Bros postponed from Christmas release to early 1992.

wasting a lot of time, thinking, 'Uh oh, I wonder how we should shoot this? What kind of angle should I use?'"

Carpenter himself sees the pressures as a bit more overwhelming, especially the attempt to complete special effects photography in time for audience test screenings prior to the film's release. The rushed post-production schedule, with Carpenter supervising Chase and co-stars Sam Neill and Daryl Hannah at the ILM facilities in Marin County, prevented the director from composing his own score. "I was going to in the beginning, but my post-production schedule is so short that I don't have time," Carpenter lamented about not being able to play with the music. "I'm too tired, and I'm too old. We want the effects ready when we screen

the film, so we'll barely make it. It's what **TERMINATOR 2** went through."

After wrapping **MEMOIRS OF AN INVISIBLE MAN**, Carpenter noted that he planned to continue his relationship with Alive. "I hope to go back and do some small projects, but I'm not sure, actually, because I'm getting a couple of big movie offers," he said. "It's interesting. You're seeing my ambivalence about movie making. On the small films, I get to have complete control. It's wonderful, but you're limited by your budget. On the big films, you have funds, but you're constantly having to please so many people. On a \$40 million film you have to take everybody into consideration, because there's a lot of pressure for it to be a big hit, so you have to deal with all that.

So I can go one way or the other. Sometimes I hate it; sometimes I love it. Personalities on bigger films often are a factor to deal with. On smaller films, sometimes you don't have the time or budget to do it perfectly.

"I have two more films to do with Alive; actually, we're adding one, so I'll be doing three. We're going to up the budgets—we've decided to do medium-low budget. I made those first two films for \$3 million. Especially **THEY LIVE** is extremely ambitious. One film I'm hoping to do—and it's not set yet—is a remake of **THE CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON**. I'm talking to Rick Baker. That would be fun. It wouldn't be a cheap film, but it wouldn't be this size. The original movie's pretty dated now, but I still love it. One of the things I'm going to do is make him [the Gillman] more human. He thinks. The conflict is not necessarily having him kidnap the girl as in the original; it's the creationist scientists who want to get rid of him because he's proof of evolution. It's a slightly different story, updated."

In the meantime, Carpenter is fairly confident that he has met the aesthetic and technical challenges inherent in making **MEMOIRS OF AN INVISIBLE MAN** justify its \$40 million budget. "You never know what kind of mood the audience is going to be in, yet there are a lot of things to satisfy. Hopefully, we've hit the target of what we have in the story to make people happy. In other words, it won't turn off older audiences, because there's a little meat to it, but younger audiences will enjoy it too." With a laugh, Carpenter added, "That's the idea behind it—but we'll probably fuck it up, somehow or another!" □

THE NAKED LUNCH

Filming the William Burroughs novel that inspired Cronenberg's venereal horror.

By Gary Kimber

"This is going to be my epic," declared writer-director David Cronenberg about his decision to follow 1988's creepy tale of personality disorder, *DEAD RINGERS*, with an interpretation of William Burroughs' cult novel *The Naked Lunch*. Budgeted at \$15 million, shooting commenced January, 1991 in Toronto and was to have concluded in Tangiers, Morocco last April, the site where Burroughs wrote the book. But Cronenberg's long-awaited dream project suffered a possibly crippling blow when world events interfered with his plans to film in Tangiers. With a week to go before impending hostilities broke out between the USA and Iraq, Cronenberg was forced to cancel plans for the location shooting—his first outside Canada—hastily re-writing the scenes that had been scheduled for three weeks of shooting in Morocco.

Burroughs' fictional city of Interzone, which stands in for Tangiers in the book, had to be recreated at various locations around Toronto. In one scene 700 tons of sand were dumped into a munitions factory creating the visual effect of an Arab desert. Said Cronenberg, "It forced me to be more internal and therefore more true to the film's precept, which is that



Cronenberg directs *ROBOCOP* star Peter Weller as William Lee, the book's stand-in for Burroughs himself, who wrote it while addicted to a variety of drugs.

Interzone is a state of mind."

Produced by Jeremy Thomas (*THE SHELTERING SKY*, *THE LAST EMPEROR*), Cronenberg's film features Peter Weller in the role of William Lee, a Burroughs stand-in. Twentieth Century-Fox is expected to open the film, which also stars Judy Davis, Julian Sands, Roy Scheider and Elias Koteas, in February.

Fresh from a visit to Paris, where the French government bestowed upon him the very prestigious Chevalier of the Order of Arts and Letters for his artistic achievements, Cronenberg talked about filming *THE NAKED LUNCH* in his small office in downtown Toronto. "I have wanted to film this book for quite a long

time," he began. "It was actually published in bits and pieces in small literary magazines like *Evergreen Review* and *Paris Review* in the late '50s before it was put together in book form. It was partly written in letters William Burroughs sent to Alan Ginsberg when he [Burroughs] was an expatriate American living in Tangiers. Then it was assembled in book form by Ginsberg and Jack Kerouac.

"When *The Naked Lunch* appeared it was more of the same. This strange, funny, grotesque, surrealistic, dream-like stuff. Despite all that, it had a lot of very real points to make about society, American society in particular, during the '50s and early '60s."

It is difficult to describe what *The Naked Lunch* is all about and impossible to digest in one sitting. Heavily addicted for 15 years to opiates like heroin and morphine (something he called "the sickness"), Burroughs wrote the book which has become world renowned as either a work of great literary rebellion or the gateway allowing the business of pornography to explode in the '60s. Written while Burroughs was in and out of his addictions, the book follows no recognizable storyline. Instead, it is written in a stream of consciousness style using "routines" between representatives of the establishment and those who wish to re-order it. Situations and characters change from paragraph to paragraph. Much of the book involves explicit homosexual acts, casual dismemberment and murder, death by sexual orgasm, political ruminations told in a satirical way and depictions of how society's control destroys the individual in insidious ways.

"It was so striking, so unusual, that I had a real affinity with it in many ways," said Cronenberg of the book. "The whole viral imagery of disease and addiction were ideas I had been playing with as a beginning writer. Burroughs seemed to crystallize all that for me. He was much older than me and living the kind of life I was not.



Cronenberg, Burroughs, now 77, and Peter Weller, during filming in Toronto, grotesque horror as a means of social commentary.

"The book is not really autobiographical. There were no characters, no narrative. There were black humor comedy routines. It is so surreal you cannot identify with it in any literary way. I was more fascinated than envious with Burroughs' lifestyle. I only envied his brilliant writing."

Burroughs himself has said in the book's introduction that he has no precise memory of writing what was later assembled by his friends Ginsberg and Kerouac for publication. It was Kerouac, not Burroughs, who suggested the title, something which Ginsberg took to mean "the nakedness of seeing, being able to see clearly through any confusing disguises."

Though actor Peter Weller is well known for his genre roles

“This is going to be my epic,” said Cronenberg. “It’s strange, funny, dream-like stuff, with a lot of very real points to make about society, America in particular.”

in such films as *ROBOCOP*, *LEVIATHAN* and *THE ADVENTURES OF BUCKAROO BANZAI*, one would not expect him to be the ideal casting choice in a film aimed squarely at adults. "The character, William Lee, has some basis in Burroughs' own life," said Cronenberg. "The character had to have the presence of a young William Burroughs and Peter Weller has that cer-

tain charisma and presence. My decision to cast him had nothing to do with his role as RoboCop, believe me. This could not be a more different kind of project.

"I think he is a much underrated actor, incredibly good. For various reasons he has not had a role that lets you see all that talent. Although he is a well-known actor, I'm hoping to discover him in another way."

It was the Alan Parker film, *SHOOT THE MOON*, where Cronenberg first spotted Weller, and Cronenberg said he was very impressed by the performance. "Peter had written me a letter while shooting *ROBOCOP 2*," recalled Cronenberg. "Mark Irwin, who has shot eight of my movies, was cinematographer and told him about *THE NAKED LUNCH*. In the letter he [Weller] said he was very influenced by Burroughs and would love to be associated with the film. I was still writing the script at that point and began thinking of

him for the lead.

"It is amazing the number of people who have been influenced by Burroughs. A lot of rock guys wanted to be involved. Groups like Steely Dan, which took its name from *The Naked Lunch*." The name is Burroughs' term for a dildo.

Making an essentially non-linear story accessible to a mass audience was a problem Cronenberg said he solved by making the process of writing the book part of the story. "I have at least five characters in the film who are writers," said Cronenberg. "In a way the movie is about writing and creativity. That might sound boring because we all have seen these movies where writers are smoking a cigarette, typing away. I promise you, this will be a most unusual look at the writing process.

"William Burroughs and I talked a lot. In fact, he, Jeremy Thomas and I went to Tangiers five years ago to talk about where things had happened with him. There were many expatriate writers of all kinds living there in the '40s, '50s and early '60s. He [Burroughs] wasn't directly involved in writing the screenplay but has read it and is very excited."

THE NAKED LUNCH will feature elaborate special effects created by Chris Walas, with whom Cronenberg worked on

continued on page 60

Weller and co-star Judy Davis, denizens of "Interzone," Burroughs' violently surreal, allegorical city, a comment on American society in the '50s and '60s.



FREEJACK

Robert Sheckley's futuristic novella gets the big-budget TOTAL RECALL treatment.

By Gary L. Wood

"It's a time travel story, with a slight variation," said FREEJACK's producer and co-writer Ronald Shusett, one of the creators of ALIEN and TOTAL RECALL.

Loosely based on the 1958 Robert Sheckley novella *Immortality Delivered*, FREEJACK stars Emilio Estevez (REPO MAN) as professional racecar driver Alex Furlong. Seconds before crashing at 140 m.p.h., Estevez is transported to the year 2009 where the rich and powerful can buy young, healthy bodies into which they can transfer their consciousness, achieving a kind of immortality. The film is directed by New Zealander Geoff Murphy (THE QUIET EARTH).

Awakening just in time to save himself, Estevez escapes and flees to New York to become the subject of a city-wide "bone hunt." Legendary rocker Mick Jagger, in his first film since 1970, plays Vacendak, the leader of bounty hunters known as "bone-jackers," who are hired to hunt down renegade bodies, or "freejacks." Warner Bros plans to open the film in February.

"NORTH BY NORTHWEST inspired TOTAL RECALL," said Shusett. "And in many ways, FREEJACK is another variation." Whereas TOTAL RECALL dealt with the implantation of artificially constructed memories, in FREEJACK science can store and retrieve a brain via computer. Noted Shusett, "I like to



Emilio Estevez (inset) stars as a racecar driver whisked to the year 2010, chased by bounty hunter Mick Jagger (above), a "bonejacker" who hunts down renegade bodies ("freejacks") fit for transplantation.

take classic themes and fill them with a wildly imaginative new insight that makes them fresh."

Sheckley's novella is an episodic, high-tech ghost story that attempts to scientifically explain death, ghosts, zombies and life-after-death. Sheckley posits a world where death is no longer a mystery that is left up to chance. Since life-after-death is a scientific fact, Hereafter Insurance may be bought by the wealthy to insure a spot for themselves. Body-swapping is commonplace, with a thriving black market. It is legal for the wealthy to purchase Hereafter Insurance for the support of an impoverished family in exchange for the use of someone's body.

FREEJACK uses Sheckley's premise as background for a fast-paced, violent chase

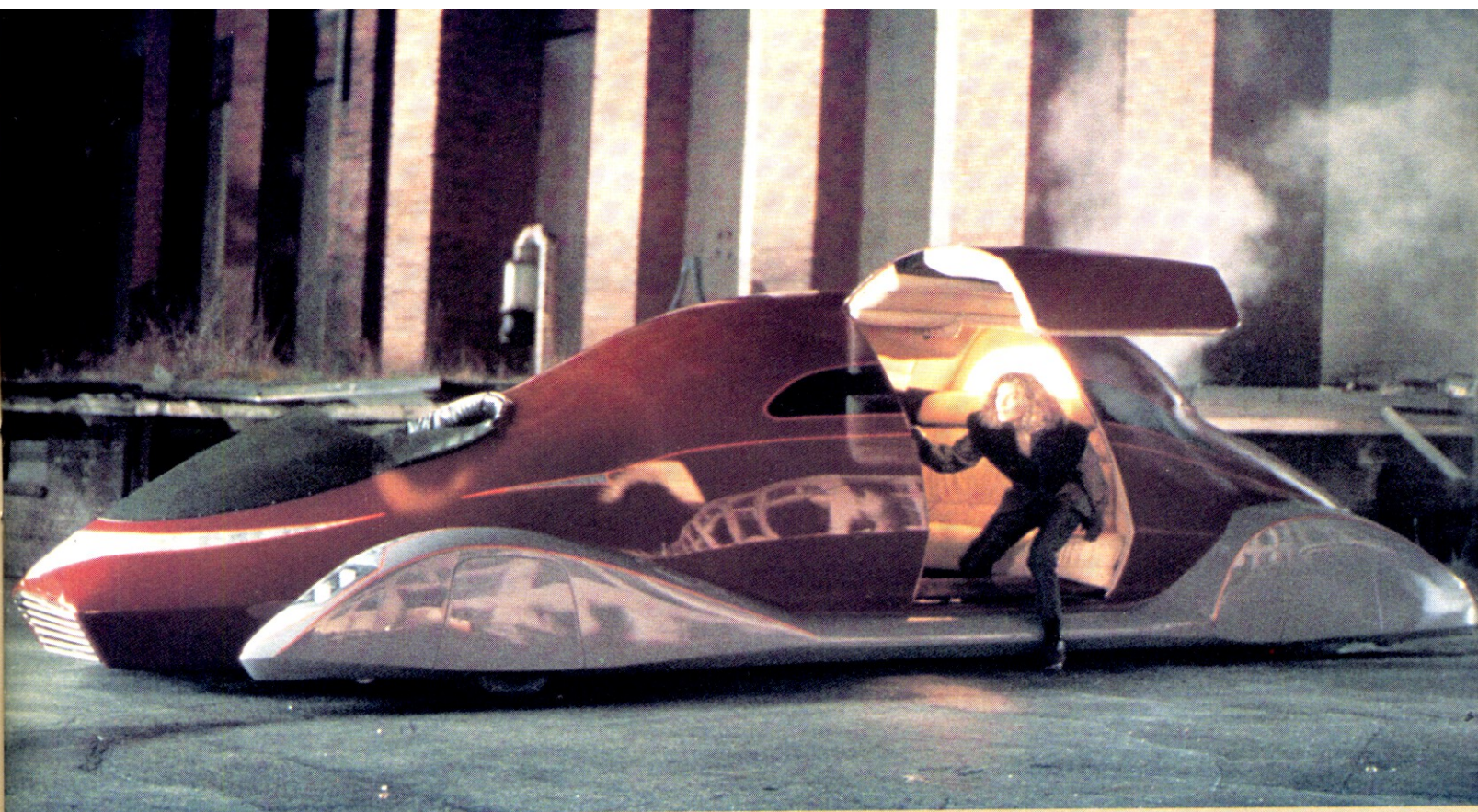
as Estevez seeks to find a former girlfriend played by Rene Russo (MR. DESTINY and MAJOR LEAGUE). Twenty years in the future she is an executive at the McCandless Corporation, run by Ian McCandless (Anthony Hopkins of SILENCE OF THE LAMBS and MAGIC), one of the wealthiest and most powerful men in the world.

Sheckley, who wrote the novella back in 1958, said he has not read the FREEJACK script, and wasn't consulted about the filming. "I think Mr. Shusett had finished writing the script before he and I talked much," recalled the author. "He never asked my advice on it. That was fine by me. Mr. Shusett wanted to play with this immortality toy himself. I'd already had my fun with it."

Sheckley, who writes from his home in Oregon, character-

ized science fiction, and his work in the field in particular, as "junk food for the mind." Sheckley didn't remember what inspired him to write the book 33 years ago, but is certain it wasn't intended as a forum to educate or uplift the reader. Recalled Sheckley, "Inspiration for me sometimes take the form of, 'Hey. That's sort of a cute idea. And how about if I handle this in that way? Won't that be sort of a goof?' As for what I hoped to achieve, I hoped to hold a reader's interest through the string of one-act turns that are one way of looking at a novel. To write a novel is achievement enough without expecting to achieve some moral purpose from it as well, as if one were some sort of priest or minister peddling enlightenment rather [than] entertainment."

For director Geoff Murphy, the process was a little more cerebral. "We looked at certain economic trends and presented a version of what they could be like in twenty years time," he said. "It was an interesting exercise." Murphy directed the film for nine weeks in Atlanta and two weeks in New York. Murphy came to America in 1990 to make YOUNG GUNS II when "work in New Zealand became increasingly hard to get." FREEJACK re-teams him with his teen-western star, Estevez. Murphy insisted that reality and human spirit, not necessarily faithfulness to Sheckley's original novella, were important to the film, though he hadn't read *Immortality Delivered*.



Rene Russo plays Estevez's former girlfriend, now an executive for the McCandless Corporation, run by Anthony Hopkins as one of the most powerful men in the world.

"The main difference between the script and the novella, from what I gather, is the time gap," said Murphy. "In the film it is twenty years, whereas in the novella it's hundreds of years. That means that, in FREEJACK, there are still people alive that [Estevez] knows."

Murphy recalled that the film's time travel element became a subject of debate during filming. "I remember there was quite a bit of argument as to whether time travel could've been invented in twenty years time," said Murphy. "I felt that was a pointless argument because once you've discovered time travel, it exists for *all* time. Which is a good indication that it never will exist, otherwise we'd have it *now*."

As much a showcase in the film as the performers is the production's vision of New York in the 21st century, serving as an integral part of the story. Award-winning production designer Joe Alves (JAWS, CLOSE ENCOUNTERS) was lured back into design from directing (JAWS 3-D) by the prospect of devising the look of the film. It was producer Stuart Oken (ABOUT LAST NIGHT, QUEEN'S LOGIC) who persuaded Alves to get back into design to tackle

the world of FREEJACK.

Noted Alves, "I thought that if I was going to design, I was going to do something that was really a *zinger*. If you read the script, you can see it just jumps out as a real design show. That's because you have to create a slightly futuristic world, about eighteen years, and extrapolate on what is happening today, and what might happen tomorrow.

"One of the key things we did was change the look of vehicles," said Alves. "They sort of dictate the look of the period." Alves made most vehicles tank-like, since only the rich and police officers can afford cars. "As society gets poorer, they

can't or don't have access to vehicles because gas is so expensive," said Alves. "They go back to older forms of transportation." The vehicles built for FREEJACK cost \$500,000 of the film's \$30 million budget.

Due to seasonal limitations, the film was shot in winter but set in summer. Atlanta doubled for New York. "To depict the 'have nots' we created New York alleys," said Alves. "Atlanta did not really have any locations that looked like Queens. But I found backs of old warehouses, and then we built streets to tie in with them. We created our own back lot there. It was hard, but it worked."

To depict the world of

"haves," Alves designed and built interior sets inside the same warehouses, plush constructs of marble and glass. The design centerpiece of the film is the McCandless Building which, through the work of DreamQuest, will appear to loom over the New York skyline, twice the size of the World Trade Center. "An office on the 180th floor looks down over Manhattan," said Alves. "That was a unique design opportunity." The top of the building is the Spiritual Switchboard, an electronic means for the living to speak with the dead, an invention of Sheckley's novella.

Alves' design for the McCandless Building was inspired by a child's jack. "It had nothing to do with the title," said Alves, "but I liked the shape; four spherical shapes, bisecting two conical shapes, with long corridors. I made up the interiors based on that. It became the logo for the corporation. Doors open iris-like, as with a camera shutter. They were complicated to make, because all the plates had to open in. The elevator comes up and disappears into the ceiling but leaves the floor. There is a lot of *that*, futuristic stuff. But we kept it real." □

The streets of Atlanta doubled for futuristic New York, with production design by Joe Alves. Warner Bros will release the Morgan Creek Production in February.



silence of

The making of director Jonathan Demme's

By Dan Persons

John Wayne—forget about him. Sylvester Stallone—never had a chance. Chuck Norris, Steve Seagal—don't make me laugh. Face it, as far as Hollywood is concerned, there's only one genuine American hero, and his name is Ed Gein.

Consider the evidence: in 1959, author Robert Bloch took the story of the transvestite with the taste for murder, cannibalism, and bodysuits fashioned from human flesh, stripped away some of its more grisly elements, and turned it into *Psycho*, an act for which Sir Alfred Hitchcock (and his estate) was eventually exceedingly grateful. In 1974, director Tobe Hooper scooped up the gristle Bloch and Hitchcock had omitted, promoted himself a micro budget and a case of dementia spurred by a prolonged period of insomnia, and came up with *THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE*.

Most importantly, in 1989, author Thomas Harris returned to the well, mated the Gein prototype with some of the characters from his previous book, *Red Dragon*, and produced the Bram Stoker Award winner, *The Silence of the Lambs*.

The first two films were not only huge successes (*PSYCHO* became Hitchcock's best-remembered effort, *THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE* garnered enough respect to win its way into the Museum of Modern Art's film study collection), they practically rewrote the way the public saw, and Hollywood made, horror. Now, director Jonathan Demme is positioned to rescue the horror and suspense genres once again, this time from the flaccid, and increasingly trivial, grips of the likes of Jason and Freddy. With his successful screen adaptation of *SILENCE*

“Somewhere in the dark reaches of your mind you get into the persona of a serial killer,” said designer Kristi Zea. “You develop a theory of what their space is like, how they live.”



Anthony Hopkins as Hannibal “The Cannibal” Lecter, boring a hole into Clarice Starling with his eyes. If Hopkins doesn't cop the Best Actor Oscar, it's a crime.

OF THE LAMBS, urgency, intelligence, and a genuine sense of danger made a welcome return to the genre.

Despite Demme's reputation for such comedies as *MARRIED TO THE MOB* and *MELVIN AND HOWARD*, the director is no stranger to action or suspense. An avid film fan, Demme made his directorial debut for producer Roger Corman, working on

such cult favorites as *CAGED HEAT* and *CRAZY MAMA*. Since leaving Corman, Demme has occasionally returned to the genre, directing *THE LAST EMBRACE* in 1979 and the hybrid (and controversial) screwball comedy/thriller *SOMETHING WILD* in 1986.

Still, the opportunity to direct *SILENCE OF THE LAMBS* was not something that Demme actively sought. It

fell to him by virtue of an existing production agreement with Orion Pictures, and as the result of actor Gene Hackman dropping out of what was supposed to be his directorial debut. At the request of Orion Pictures then-president of production Mike Medavoy, Demme agreed to take on the project. Assembling a production team from those who had worked on previous Demme films—including co-producers Ed Saxon, Kenneth Utt, and Ron Bozman, director of photography Tak Fujimoto (who can trace his time with Demme to photographing *CAGED HEAT* in 1974), production designer Kristi Zea (a relative newcomer, having worked previously on *MARRIED TO THE MOB*), and editor Craig McKay—the director got down to work.

Pre-production started in August, 1989, with Demme and several of his production team—including Zea, Saxon, and Fujimoto—setting out to scout locations and gather concepts. At Zea's recommendation, Fujimoto visited a gallery in Washington, D.C. that featured the work of painter Francis Bacon—angushed, distorted images that became the inspiration for Zea's nocturnal designs and Fujimoto's lighting schemes. The crew also visited the Washington, D.C. headquarters of the FBI and the bureau's training academy at Quantico, Virginia to find locations and bits of realistic “color” (prize winners in the latter category were the signs posted to welcome trainees to the bureau's obstacle course: “HURT, AGONY, PAIN . . . LOVE IT”), as well as acquired background on the bureau's Behavioral Sciences unit.

“We visited with John Douglas,” recalled Zea, “who heads the unit that Scott Glenn's

the lambs

instant horror classic, a chiller for the '90s.



Demme and Hopkins confer on a scene set in Lector's cell, conceived by production designer Kristi Zea to be framed by the rough-hewn walls of a prison sub-basement, a set built in Pittsburgh. Inset: Demme's inspiration, the Thomas Harris bestseller.

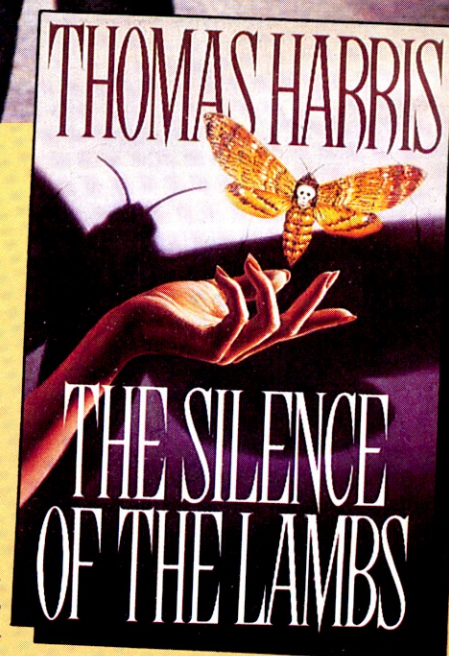
character is all about. And there's actually a man, down in the basement that used to be the FBI's bomb shelter, whose only job is to investigate and solve serial murders, usually with a sexual bent to them. Just meeting with this fellow—who's on the right side of the law, but who literally thinks the way a serial killer thinks, develops a psychological profile, and is so successful at this that he oftentimes single-handedly figures out a serial killer's next move—helped us design a

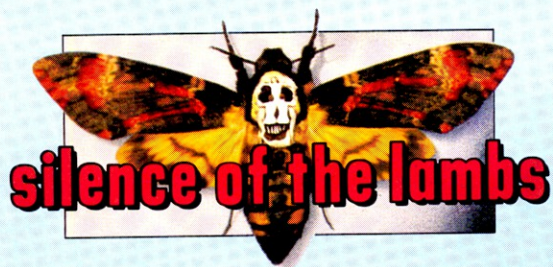
movie about people like this. You must, somewhere in the dark reaches of your mind, get into their persona and develop a theory of what their space is like, how they would live."

For most of the physical space itself, the production settled on the city of Pittsburgh and its surroundings, an area distinguished both by the profundity of its buildings—built with considerable support from industrialist Andrew Carnegie—and by blue-collar, working-class neighborhoods

whose atmosphere seemed to mirror the film's dark mood.

"Pittsburgh," said Zea, "has a great, great quality to it—none of which we actually saw in our film, but it influenced us anyway. It has these towns that were in existence solely to support the steel mill, and now they're ghost towns—rows upon rows upon rows of boarded up, Victorian homes. There's a sense of despair. Even though out of this rubble is coming this great, new city, there is this kind of despair about a period





silence of the lambs

PERFECTING PERFORMANCE

Director Jonathan Demme on his hands-off approach to getting the best out of actors.

By Dan Persons

Almost from the moment *CITIZEN'S BAND* (1977) drew the attention of critics and audiences, Jonathan Demme has been praised for his achievements as an "actor's director." Recently, while speaking to an audience attending the Illinois Artists Film and Video Festival at Chicago's Music Box Theatre, Demme revealed some of the techniques he uses for coaxing memorable performances from the likes of Anthony Hopkins, Jodie Foster, Jason Robards, Melanie Griffith, Jeff Daniels, and Michelle Pfeiffer. To hear Demme explain it, his success relies almost as much on what he doesn't do, as what he does.

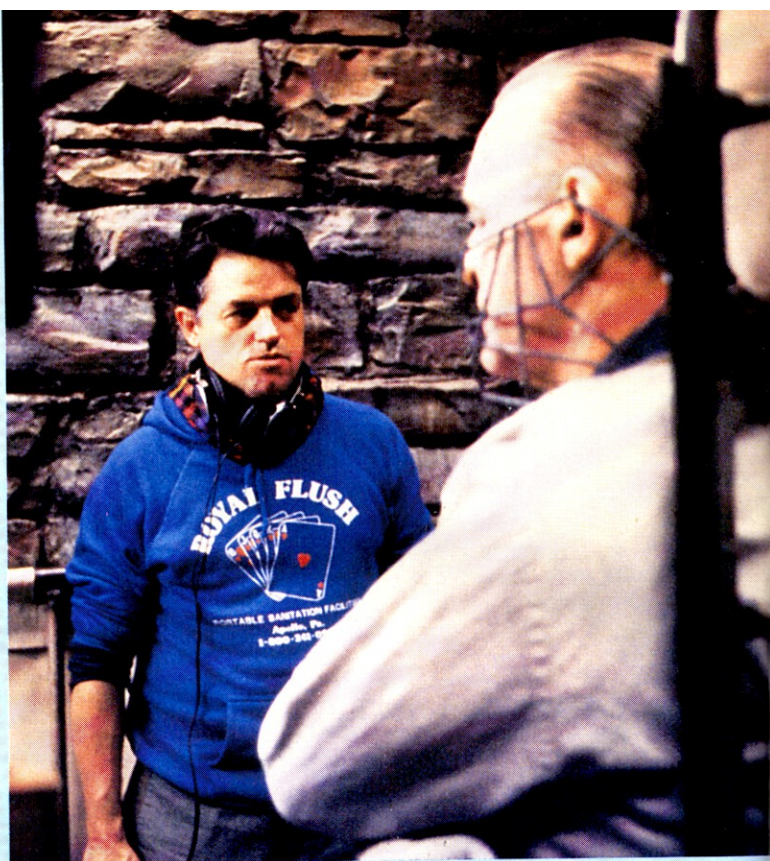
"I hate long talks with actors," said Demme. "I never really talk to the actors before the movie about my interpretation of their characters, or my interpretation of the story or anything like that. They read the script. I read the script. I've got to know that the actors are the kind of people who can take full responsibility for their characters, who have great confidence in doing that, because I am very preoccupied with getting the story straight and making sure the camera's placed in the right spot at the right time.

"I hate it when an actor asks, 'Where was I born?' or 'You think I ever worked in a restaurant?' I say, 'Would it be good if you did?' 'Yes.' 'Then you

did!' I don't like to talk about that kind of stuff.

"When we do a scene, I just go out on the set and have the actors come out. I always say the same thing, 'Okay, let's stumble through a rehearsal.' The actors move around the set, and I start to find a staging that they'll find comfortable. I couldn't care less about performance at that stage of the game—I know they're going to be good, because they're wonderful actors.

"We get a blocking that the actors feel comfortable with—they *have* to feel comfortable with it, because how else can they do this superhuman, extraordinary thing of transcending embarrassment and mortification to pretend something in front of everybody? They *have* to feel comfortable. You help them find a staging they feel good about, and then they go to have their makeup



Demme with Anthony Hopkins, refining Lector's muzzled mad dog persona.

and hair fixed up, while we light the set. And then they come back and you start rehearsing on film.

"I love to rehearse on film. I'm terrified of the possibility that we'll get it right when there's no film rolling. I'm not sure that that happens too often, but I do believe that, every once in a great while, there's something *so* special that happens the first or second time, or that the act of discovery is so completely fresh, that it's always worth getting on film. But then I still don't want to talk to the actors very much—I'm afraid I'll say too much or say the wrong thing, and I'm trying not to think about my fears, trying to get

lost in the performance.

"If there's a response that isn't as strong as the others, then I'll race in and sort of say something as if I were a moviegoer who had just wandered in off the street. I'll say, 'I didn't believe that moment.' And what I've learned is never stand there and wait for the actor to respond. I just say what I have to say and then turn around and slip away.

"Even if—given this hideous task of achieving some kind of reality through utter fabrication—even if it's, in my view, awful, just hammy, or lifeless, I'll still say, 'Cut. *Fantastic!*' And I'll mean it on a very real level, 'My God! You were out there trying to pretend something in reality—*Wonderful!* But . . . maybe you should do it a whole, completely different way, just for the record.'

"You have to protect everybody from being humiliated or embarrassed or made to feel like they're not doing good work. Then, finally, almost every scene gets to be pretty good. And if you're working with really gifted actors, and if the text has any merit to it, it will probably get to be *really* good. And every once in a while, it'll be *great*.

"That's how I like to work with actors." □

Demme directs Jodie Foster as Starling, finding Lector's stored head-in-a-jar.



of time when things were much more golden than they are now."

In the city of Pittsburgh itself, the production found the Allegheny County Courthouse, which became the exterior of the Baltimore State Hospital for the Criminally Insane. For Starling's visit to the slightly off-center entomologists Roden and Pilcher, the production selected the Andrew Carnegie Museum of natural history, a site that not only offered magnificent settings but also, quite coincidentally, the largest moth collection in the United States. The Pittsburgh National Guard agreed to the use of its hangar for the meeting between Hannibal Lector and Senator Ruth Martin. The homes of the doomed Frederica Bimmel and the crazed Jame "Buffalo Bill" Gumb were found in suburbs located within a 75-mile radius of town.

Just as crucially, the crew found the perfect location for the film's most notable set piece, the escape of Doctor Lector. "Jonathan kept saying, 'I love this room. I love this room. What can we do with this room.'" recalled Zea of their examination of the immense, wood-paneled space found at the Allegheny County Soldier's and Sailor's Memorial Hall. "And for a while, it wasn't etched in our minds what we were going to do with it, we just loved it. I said, 'Hey, let's make this the place where Memphis puts [Lector] after he's been transported. We'll put a cage in the center, and he'll be just like some kind of zoo animal, like there's no jail big enough or secure enough for this guy, like he's a specimen in his own right. So putting this raw cage in the middle of this beautiful room suddenly became the absolutely right thing to do."

Shooting commenced in late November, 1989, locating first in Washington and Quantico to cover the FBI sequences, then transferring to Pittsburgh.

The production completed location shooting before the Christmas holidays, and was scheduled to pick up after the New Year with the sequences set in Lector's high-security

DEMME ON DIRECTING

"I hate long talks with actors, about my interpretation of their characters or the story. I hate it when they ask, 'Where was I born?' or 'You think I ever worked in a restaurant?'"



Hopkins as Lector, drawing in his cell, confined behind thick, impenetrable Plexiglas, a design solution to avoid the visual busyness of bars interfering with Lector's electrifying encounters with Starling. Inset: A design sketch of Starling in the lair of the beast.

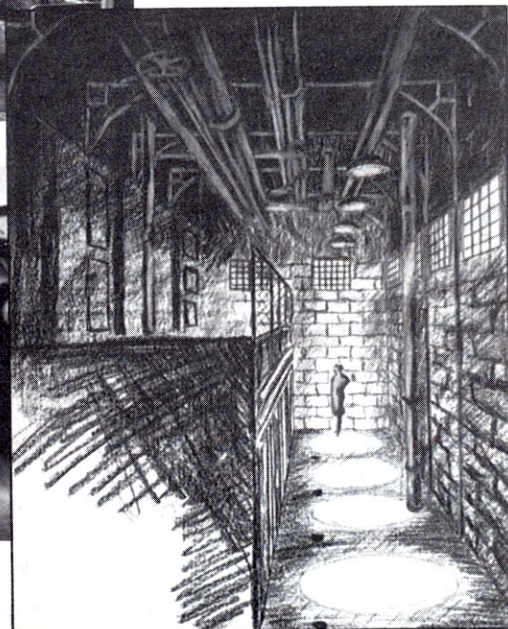
cell and Jame Gumb's basement. This left one problem: finding a space suitable for use as a soundstage, the one facility Pittsburgh could not offer. The crew thought they had found their answer in the gymnasium of an abandoned school, and promptly began plans for construction. That, of course, was before someone discovered that the entire building was run-through with layers of asbestos. Recalled Kristi Zea of the reaction to the unpleasant news, "Orion, and [producer] Kenny Utt, and every-

body else said, 'Get out! Take your stuff... no, *don't* take your stuff. Just *leave!* Do not pass GO, do not collect \$200, just GET OUT!'" Due to the unexpected evacuation, the production was set back four weeks, forcing art, construction, and paint departments to labor over the Christmas hiatus in order to make up time.

Found as a replacement for the ill-fated school was an abandoned Westinghouse turbine factory, now part of an industrial park known as Keystone Commons. Within this

mammoth space—some four football fields in length—two of the film's most crucial sets were built, Lector's high security cell and the basement lair of serial killer Jame Gumb.

Lector's cell posed a major problem. As described in the novel, it was an elaborate system of bars and nets, designed as much to discourage visitors from lingering too near the prisoner as to keep Hannibal the Cannibal confined. From the very first, Zea realized that such a design would be a filmic disaster. "[Art director] Tim [Galvin] had worked on a film where the bars were a problem: when dialogue happened between two people, both eyes couldn't be seen; it was a big headache. So up at the front I said, 'Let's do some tests with bar widths,' and we did all these tests with different kinds of nets and different kinds of bars." The ultimate solution was to give Lector a glass



enclosure, *sans* bars.

Originally, the plans for Gumb's basement included a two-story, elevated segment to accommodate the pit where Gumb imprisoned his victims. "That would have been too bad," said co-producer Ed Saxon, "because you get nervous standing up there on something that was built in just two weeks." More prudently, the production was able to construct the entire set at ground level, using an existing pit, originally installed to permit the servicing of immense



Demme and longtime cinematographer Tak Fujimoto (in FBI cap), filming Lector's airport meeting with senator Ruth Martin in *SILENCE OF THE LAMBS*.

turbines, as the hole within which Gumb's well was sunk.

As for the floor plan of Gumb's labyrinthine basement, Kristi Zea pointed out that the steps needed to come up with the design were nearly as twisted as the killer himself: "the book and the script were slightly different. The book was incredibly descriptive—if you read the passages of the book that described this basement, it's very detailed. We literally held the book in one hand and a pencil in the other and said, 'Okay, room here: he walks down the room into the corridor. Next room has the model...' and on, and on. And we just made this long string of requirements that the book had, and then went back to the script and said, 'Well, this doesn't make sense, but what if he does *this* scene in *here*?' And that would help our logic of the layout. Then we had to take a footprint of the house that we were shooting in—which nobody could really understand, but we did—and we conformed the basement to that footprint. We sort of bent it around on itself, then [art director] Tim [Galvin] played around with it for a couple of days and came back to me with a couple of different floor plans."

In the end, it was assistant art director Natalie Wilson who had the final word on the whole, convoluted process, taking one of the plans, slapping onto it squares that included phrases like "DEAD LADY IN TUB: GO BACK

TO BEGINNING," and "Gumb: The Game" was born. (No word from Parker Brothers on marketing plans.)

The final element of Gumb's environment came not from the construction shop, but from moth wrangler and stylist Ray Mendez. As explained in both books and film, there are strict import controls placed upon death's head moths—the creatures which Gumb uses as grisly calling cards. Rather than subject the production to the trouble of obtaining special customs permits, Mendez (along with his assistant, Leanne Drogen) hit upon a simple solution: take the common, similar looking tomato horn worm moth, and rig it with makeup to resemble its more exotic brethren. "They were still trying to get their hands on the real moth," said Mendez. "I said, 'Look, if it doesn't work, let me do some experimenting.' So they gave me the okay to go ahead and get some moths and try my costuming idea.

"Moths and butterflies, if you've ever picked one up, you notice that the scales come off of the wings. Part of the reason for that is that these animals fly into spider webs, especially moths that fly at night. When they hit it, what sticks to the glue is the scales, then they fly away—it's an escape mechanism. So I knew I could take the scales off easily. I had to devise a way of gassing the moths, taking the scales away (from their backs), and putting on a little costume (actually a painted, death's head applique



THE CORMAN CONNECTION

Director Jonathan Demme is a graduate of Roger Corman's movie school of hard knocks.

By Dan Persons

Don't be too upset if you missed Roger Corman's appearance in *THE SILENCE OF THE LAMBS*—he's on-screen for something like a minute, just long enough for his character, FBI director Hayden Burke, to have a telephone conversation with Scott Glenn as Agent Crawford. Even some people who know the producer/director by sight weren't quick enough to catch him.

His sudden appearance, though, shouldn't come as any surprise. Other Corman discoveries—including Francis Ford Coppola and Joe Dante—have seen fit to pay homage to the legendary, low-budget filmmaker in such a fashion. Likewise, for director Jonathan Demme, the casting was more than just a clever in-joke. It was also a salute to

the man who, some 21 years ago, sat before a former student of veterinary medicine and recognized in him the makings of a top-flight director.

Having flunked chemistry during his first year in college, Demme found himself with an expensive trimester ahead of him and no clear career path in sight. Deciding to capitalize on his passion for films, he became critic for the college newspaper, winning the post after cribbing a review of Peter Sellers' *THE WRONG ARM OF THE LAW* (1962) from some newspaper write-ups found in the school library (said Demme in Chicago while explaining the event to an audience attending the Illinois Artists Film and Video Festival, "From then on, I *did* see the films.") Once out of college, Demme was quick to seek further opportunities to attend free screenings. He

Corman as FBI chief Hayden Burke, a cameo in honor of giving Demme his first break in Hollywood, writing, producing and directing for New World Pictures.



“Jonathan learned from us and then went beyond. Clearly he was highly intelligent and had a great love for filmmaking. That is a combination that has always worked well.”

writing press releases for Levine. The job eventually led to London, where Demme met Roger Corman while doing publicity work for the director's 1970 actioner, *VON RICHTHOFEN AND BROWN*.

Corman remembered the meeting well: “Clearly he was highly intelligent, and he had a great knowledge and love for filmmaking,” said Corman of Demme. “I think that that combination has always worked well. We got talking about various things, and I mentioned if he ever came to Hollywood to look me up—there might be some possibility of an assignment as a writer. He and his then-partner Joe Viola did.”

Recalled Demme about working for Corman in London: “He said, ‘Do you like motorcycle movies?’ I said, ‘Oh yes, very much. Especially your *THE WILD ANGELS*.’ And he said, ‘You’ve got good taste!’ No, what he really said was, ‘Okay, fine. I’m starting up this film company called New World Pictures. You seem like a bright young man, why don’t you write a motorcycle script for me when you finish the publicity job on this movie?’”

Collaborating with Viola, the two fledgling screenwriters came up with a story that read like a cross between the standard biker flick and Akira Kurosawa's *RASHOMON*.

“Okay, the knifing’s very good,” Demme recalled Corman saying. “The rape’s very effective. Throw out all this interpretation of reality stuff, and come out to California. Joe, you direct. John, you produce.”

That was how *ANGELS HARD AS THEY COME* (1972) reached the screen, and how Demme and Viola received their introduction to the production side of filmmaking. Afterwards, both men repeated their producing/directing roles on Corman's *THE HOT BOX* (1972). Describing the spirit that drove both films, Demme said, “Roger is a real, sincere, bleeding heart. He wants his films to have some sort of liberal slant to them, and he *means* it. In those days we made movies for a small amount of money and everybody made meager salaries. They’d be released in thousands of drive-ins and they’d make their money back immediately, the very first weekend. And he’s done versions of this ever since.”

Not that the students couldn’t pass a lesson on to the master when the situation called for it. “On *THE HOT BOX*,” recalled Corman, “it looked like they were going to go a day over schedule. They were shooting in the Phillipines, and I called Jonathan to say, ‘Why are you going over schedule?’ And he

wound up as reviewer for a shopping guide in Miami, Florida, the city where his father worked as publicity director for the Fountainbleu Hotel.

At the same time Demme was laboring to build a career on his opinions, film producer Joseph E. Levine was regularly docking a houseboat at the canal opposite the Fountainbleu. It was Demme’s father in conversation with the producer, who mentioned his son’s work, and received in return an invitation for the younger Demme to visit Levine on his boat. “Of course,” said Demme, “I got up a scrapbook of reviews. He [Levine] opened it up and flipped through the pages and got to a review of one of his movies, *ZULU*, which I had reviewed very favorably. I’m a much more politically conscious person now—I’d probably review it unfavorably—but I liked it then and, in

fact, I was very laudatory about it. Levine read through it and said, ‘My God, you have *great* taste!’ And he actually looked at me and said, ‘You want to work for me?’

“I said, ‘Yes!’”

“Where do you want to work?” Demme said Levine replied. “New York, London, or Rome?”

Demme chose New York, where—following a stint in the Air Force reserves—he began

Foster's terror-filled glance at a closed door at the climax of *SILENCE OF THE LAMBS*, one of Corman's remembered lessons.



said, "The big battle scene is taking longer than we thought, but we'll only be one day over." I said, "Okay," and hung up. It was only after that I thought, wait a minute. *There's no big battle scene in that script.* They had added a battle scene on location!"

Such ambition apparently had to be rewarded. With his next film, the 1974 women-in-prison drama *CAGED HEAT*, Demme was elevated to the role of the director. Of the film, he said, "It's certainly as wannabe Sam Fuller as any poor, little low-budget women's prison movie ever aspired to. We made that for \$185,000. Everybody was rushing their education in public, more or less. All the actors were new to acting, and I was certainly new to directing. This was Tak Fujimoto's first, full film [as director of photography]. We shot it in four weeks. I've found the way it utilized the plight of people in prison very moving—we were trying very hard."

CAGED HEAT was followed by *CRAZY MAMA* (1975), starring Cloris Leachman. It was not necessarily a film Demme wanted to make. "It's funny the things that can happen to you as you're trying to forge a career in filmmaking," said Demme. "After *CAGED HEAT* was finished and did quite well at the drive-ins, Corman assigned me to write a sort of red-necked revenge movie along the lines of *WALKING TALL* and *BILLY JACK*. He suggested doing a film set against the backdrop of stripmining, which

Demme, during his appearance at Chicago's Illinois Artists Film & Video Festival, lauding Corman's influence.



DEMME ON CORMAN

“Roger Corman is one of my great, personal heroes. He is a stingy, money-grubbing multimillionaire, but he also loves movies. He’s legendary for the people he’s given breaks.”



Corman poses with Foster as Starling and Scott Glenn as Crawford, her boss.

I then went out and researched. I got a lot of very exciting material and started writing a script and developing a very passionate theory about the subject—it was getting close to the point where I thought we had a script we were going to make.

"And then I got a phone call from Roger. I was expecting him to call up and say, 'Okay, let's set a starting date on *FIGHTING MAD*.' Instead, he said, 'We're shelving *FIGHTING MAD*, but I want you to start directing *CRAZY MAMA* in ten days. Shirley Clarke was supposed to direct, but she had the inevitable falling out with Roger and Julie Corman—who was producing the film—and quit. But they had a start date and, more importantly, the picture was already booked in theatres in two month's time. That was often the way Roger made films: he put a title out to the drive-ins and if enough theatres booked it, then he'd go ahead and have a script written and shot.

"So Corman said, 'You start directing in ten days and you have casting sessions this afternoon at one o'clock.' I tried to argue because I was devastated that we weren't going to do

FIGHTING MAD—you get all swept up in these things, aim your life towards the subject of the next film you're going to make. And there was no way *FIGHTING MAD* was going to be made—*CRAZY MAMA* was going to happen.

"So I drew the line: 'I must read the script before I have casting sessions!'"

The sudden shift of subject matter was only the start of Demme's problems: "*CRAZY MAMA* was shot in three weeks. We edited it in ten days with a team of two editors: Lewis Teague and Alan Holtzman. Teague and Holtzman both of whom have gone on to do a lot of films, were very busy writing their critiques of my directing. They were both desperate to direct, so they would take a look at a cut and instead of coming to me and finding out what I wanted them to do, they'd race to their typewriters and type up all these notes and give them to Roger. And it's very hard to get something satisfactory under those circumstances."

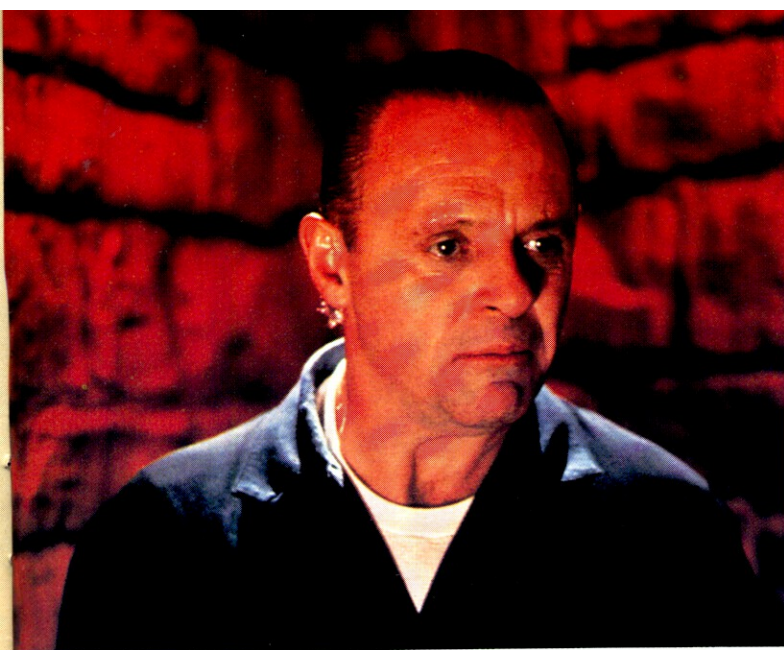
The attempted coup never came off and, perhaps as consolation, Corman gave Demme a chance to bring *FIGHTING*

MAD, starring Peter Fonda, to the screen, for 20th Century-Fox in 1976. Following that, Demme moved on to Paramount and *CITIZEN'S BAND* (1977). Even though the departure marked the end of Demme's professional relationship with Corman, the producer feels that some of his influence has carried over to Demme's subsequent efforts: "Jonathan learned from us and then went beyond. I don't want to take any credit whatsoever for the good work he's doing. He's doing it because he himself is a talented and hardworking man. But we may have helped to some extent."

Said Demme of Corman's influence, "I had a one-hour lunch with him one day where he just machine-gunned rules about how to direct and how to make things interesting visually. Over the years, I've sort of thought about it and thought about how maybe I knew those rules anyway, but I had never thought of applying them to the task at hand. And it was terrific to hear all these rules put forth in a way I had never really heard or seen before.

"At the end of *SILENCE OF THE LAMBS*, when Jodie Foster has finished the exchange with Catherine in the pit, she goes and secures one last door and turns around. In the movie, it cuts to her point-of-view moving up to this other door. I made the movie, and I still find it disturbing to be approaching that door. It was Roger who told me, many years ago, 'The most terrifying shot in movies is a hand-held camera moving slowly up toward a closed door.' And, goddammit, it is!

"Roger Corman is one of my personal, great heroes. He is a stingy, money-grubbing, multimillionaire, but he also loves movies—you actually come across people like that from time to time in the business. He's also legendary for the number of people he's given opportunities to. He's great at spotting someone who's going to be a really hard worker. He's got a really terrific instinct for that, even if the person himself doesn't necessarily realize it. I didn't realize that about myself until I started actually doing it. He's a great guy. He's wonderful." □



Hopkins as Lector, a performance punched home by Demme's use of closeups.

fashioned from a section of false nail). That's really the only obvious, physical difference."

Getting the moths to "hit their marks" during the finale's elaborate steadicam shots was another hurdle Mendez had to overcome. His answer: a "flying harness" fashioned from one of the death's head costumes and connected to a wire .001mm thick—about one-third the thickness of a human hair. "Imagine a fish on a line: when it first bites, the fish takes off and is running full blast. As it tires out, you can just reel it in, it'll sit at the bottom of the line. That's what I did with the moths. When I got them to that point, they were still flying, they were still hovering, they still looked good, but now I could fly them left or right, and I could then take directions from the director."

In addition, it was Mendez

who was responsible for supplying the specially sculpted moth cocoons used for Starling's visit to the entomologists—one rigged with tubes to ooze amber fluid when the exterior was cut, another arranged with a pre-cut flap that opened to reveal the tell-tale death's head. To accommodate this work, and the special needs of Mendez's winged charges, the production built the wrangler a ten-by-ten by eight-foot mobile lab, complete with work areas and full environmental control.

Getting the bugs from their supplier in North Carolina to their Pittsburgh digs was another story. Mendez's solution was to book an extra, bulkhead seat on a regularly scheduled flight, and have someone escort the moths out to the shoot, the bugs travelling in a specially designed carrying case equipped with easily

grasped holders and—since moths go into hibernation under light—internal illumination.

"Fortunately," said Mendez, recalling the first test run, "the Gulf war wasn't going on, because when you arrive at the airport, you have to open your bag and have it x-rayed. And I have this trunk, this shipping trunk, all locked up. Now, we had designed it with special flaps so you could look inside and inspect it without having to open it, but since the moths were all literally asleep, I was quite ready to open the case up with a couple of hundred moths inside and show them what was inside. We got to the area where they were checking the luggage—we had cleared everything with the airline officials and they had informed the gate people we were coming—and we said, 'Here, would you like to look at all the moths?' and it was like *Noooooooo!!* They *really* didn't want any part of it."

Excepting the gymnasium debacle, the production, by all accounts, proceeded smoothly—a feat due in no small part to the familiarity Demme's crew members had with each other. Said makeup supervisor Carl Fullerton, a newcomer, "Anytime I was there it was a very pleasant atmosphere. It was a very friendly group of people to work with. That seems to be important for these people: everyone is interested in not only doing the best job that he can, but making sure that when ideas are shared that feelings



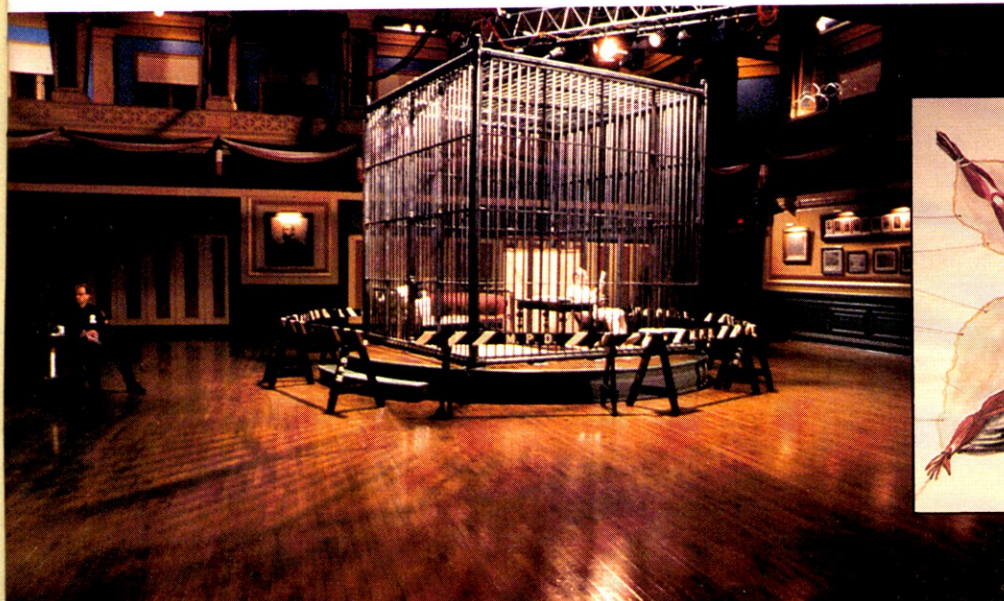
Sympathy for the devil: Hopkins as Lector at the fade-out, on the trail of making Dr. Chilton a meal in Bimini.

are not hurt. It was just a very humane group."

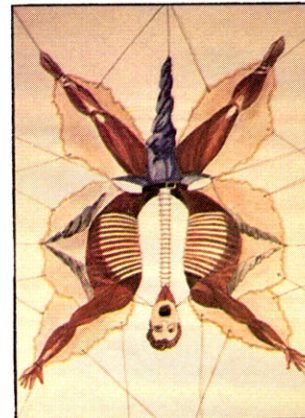
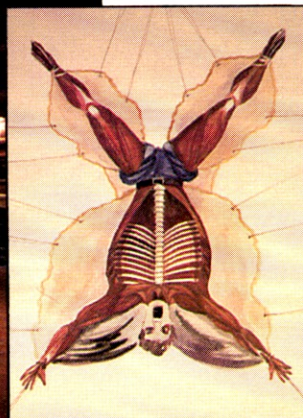
"That's my big thing now," said Demme during an appearance at the Illinois Artists Film and Video Festival. "As I see my work improving, I notice that the people I'm working with are very, very different, on both sides of the camera. You've got to really fight to work with the best people you can, because it will only be as good as you can dream it, *unless* you surround yourself with people who can make it even better."

Still, what with basing production in the dead of winter in a factory that could easily have accommodated ten more copies

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Pittsburgh's Allegheny County Soldier's and Sailor's Hall served as the location to film Lector's holding cell in transit. Below: Discarded design concepts to make the corpse of Officer Boyle, lashed to a cage, moth-like in appearance.





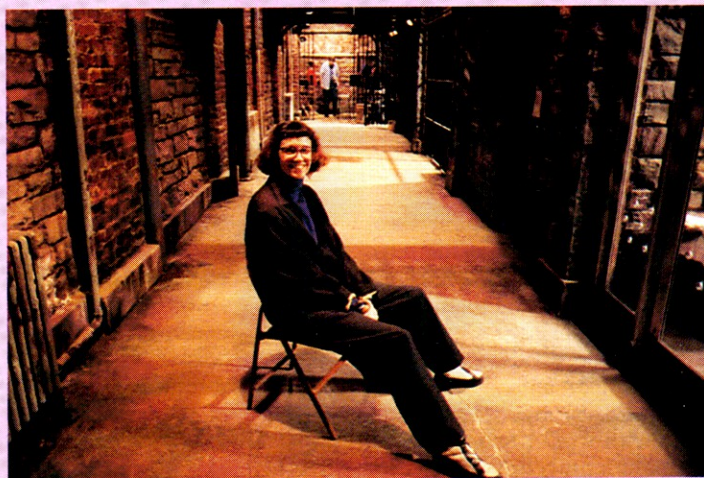
PRODUCTION DESIGN, VISUALIZING THE NIGHTMARE

For pert, perky production designer Kristi Zea, developing the film's stark imagery was like a descent into hell.

By Dan Persons

To date, Kristi Zea has served as production designer for two Jonathan Demme films: *SILENCE OF THE LAMBS* and the previous *MARRIED TO THE MOB*. By her account, the experiences were well worth their troubles. "[Demme] really does give his creative group a lot of latitude to come up with the best things that they can. He encourages active participation—you go that extra tenth of a mile for him because he is so appreciative of your work. He'll send me a script and I'll read it and think about it and come up with some ideas. Then we'll sit around and have a kind of conceptual pow-wow, and I'll throw into the ring visual ideas I'm having about things."

In the case of *SILENCE OF THE LAMBS*, Zea admitted that even she was startled by the audacity of her concepts. "I'm such a chicken when I go to movies, I bury my head. I can't see most of Stephen



Zea takes a break at the foot of Lector's cell, a set built in a factory in Pittsburgh.

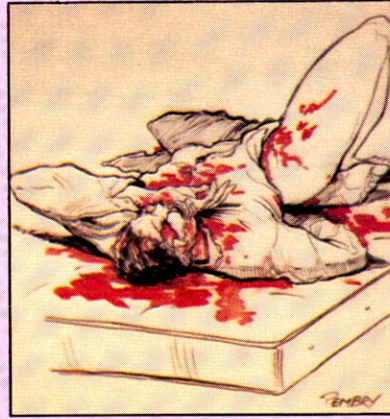
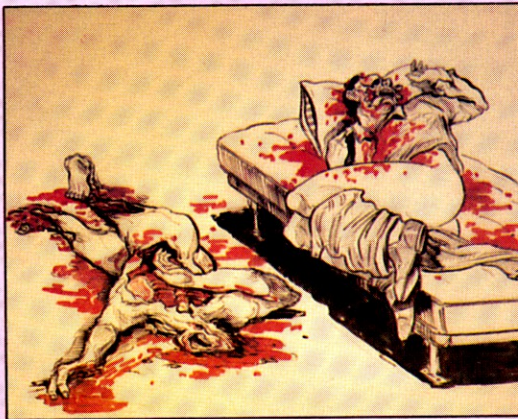
King's things—*THE SHINING* scared me to death. I have no tolerance for any kind of suspense or terror or anything. So my doing this was a real departure. I don't know what got into me."

As with her previous films, the designer found herself turning for inspiration to the work of twentieth-century artists. "In the case of *MARRIED TO*

THE MOB, there was a book by [photographer] Amy Arbus that completely enraptured me. It's just a series of incredibly wonderful portraits of people in their homes. There are a couple of portraits in that book that I showed to Jonathan, and I said, "This has a phenomenal feeling to me," and "I love the way this room looks," and "Look at these people." And he

said, "Yeah, that's great."

"On *SILENCE OF THE LAMBS*, it was a little different in that the material was so macabre. But I kept getting into my head the idea of Francis Bacon and his paintings. There was something about it. The head in the jar looks like a couple of the Bacon self-portraits; the 'Shot from Hell,' as it's known—this hideous, splayed-out corpse on the side of this large cage inside this room—was derivative of a couple of paintings by Francis Bacon. In fact, I had actually wanted to go further with that, and push it into a completely unreal kind of a situation. Jonathan said, "You know, for the first time you are actually doing something gorier than even I can accept." He said, "I can't buy that"—I was showing him pictures of splayed beef carcasses. When I think back on it. I think, "Jesus, I'm glad we didn't do that." (Demme's reaction appears not to have been an isolated response. At least one employee at New

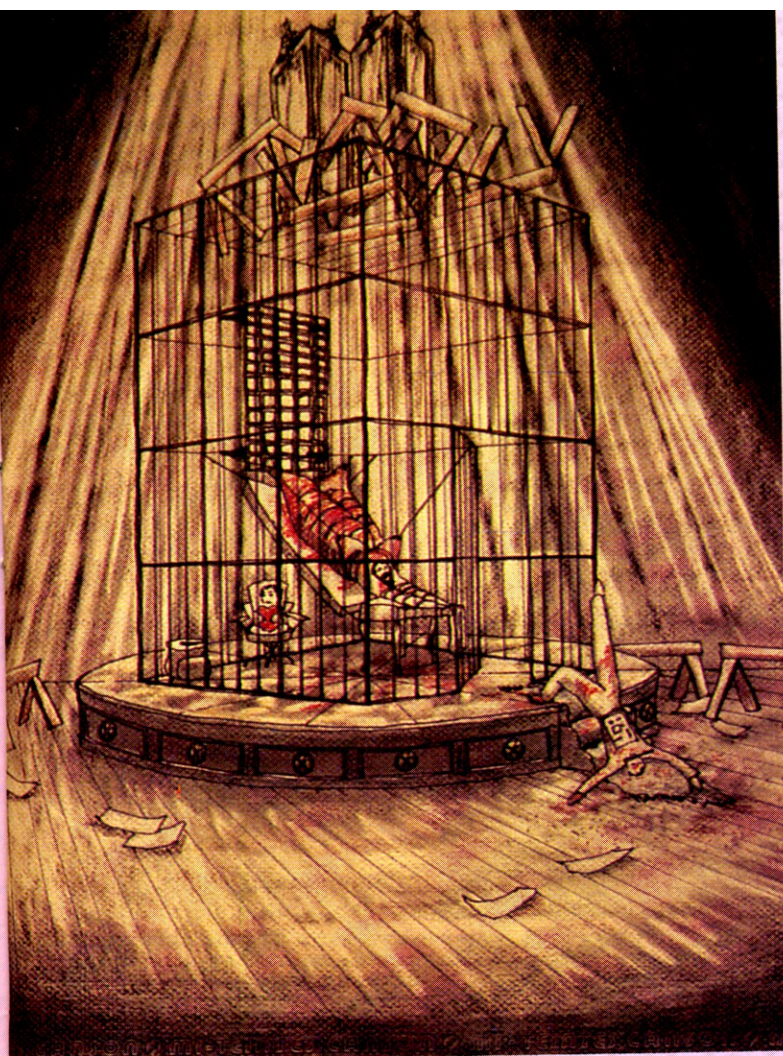


DESIGNING LECTOR'S DEPRADATIONS

Concepts of Hannibal Lector's slaughter of guards Pembry and Boyle presented to director Jonathan Demme by Kristi Zea and her production design team. Left: Studies of Pembry with the possibility of Boyle at his side. Right: Ideas for the positioning of Boyle mutilated corpse, in the film lashed by Lector to his cage and dressed like a moth.

PLUMBING THE DEPTHS

“I’m a chicken when I go to movies; I bury my head. I can’t see most of Stephen King’s things—**THE SHINING** scared me. Doing this was a real departure. I don’t know what got into me.”



Lector's carnage, a design concept for the butchering of his guards that called for one to be lashed outside the cage, with the other wrapped-up, cocoon-like, inside.

every thirty seconds to make sure (the prisoners) weren't killing themselves. An unbelievable photograph.

"I took it completely from that. Cut it in half and made the outside wall the subterranean wall of the building. The theory was that this was in the sub-sub-basement, and the guys that were down there were the worst elements of humanity. They had run out of space and had to turn what just would have been the boiler area into cells, so that running along the walls and ceilings were the pipes for the rest of the building—gas and heat and steam. So Tim Galvin, who was the art director, and Gary Kosko, who's an architect from Pittsburgh but also does art direction for films, went into a huddle and came up with this incredible scheme of pipes and networks and valves and stuff. I just wanted a lot of guts showing."

The front of the cell was another story. At Tim Galvin's suggestions, test footage was shot using the bar-and-net configuration described in the novel. The results recalled Zea, were horrendous, "Jonathan was really unhappy. He said, 'You know, I'm not going to want to have the dialogue between these two with some-

thing like this between them. I'm going to go crazy. Can't the camera just go inside the bars for some of the dialogue?' And I said, 'Welllll . . . what are you saying? The camera is suddenly inside the bars, but what are you going to do about the net?'"

"I don't know if he thought of it or I did, but one of us said, 'You know, banks, liquor stores have this Plexiglas that they use, they put this giant, thick plastic between themselves and the world.' And hence was born this idea of this kind of fish in a bowl, with all the nuts and bolts and everything being really ballsy. We got Plexiglass that was an inch and a half, two inches thick. And we put these airholes into it because then I said, 'Well, that's going to be a sound problem—how are we going to hear him?' It was a

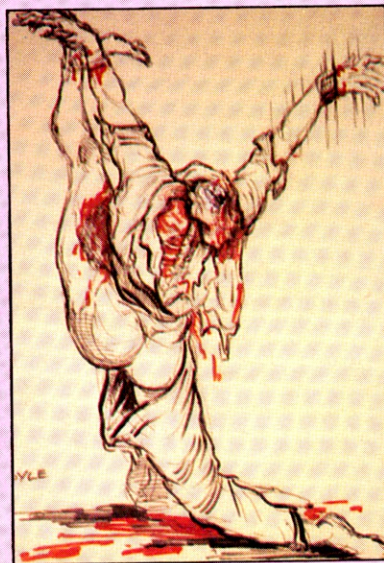
York's American Museum of the Moving Image has admitted to becoming physically ill during his attempts to catalogue Zea's graphic imagery.)

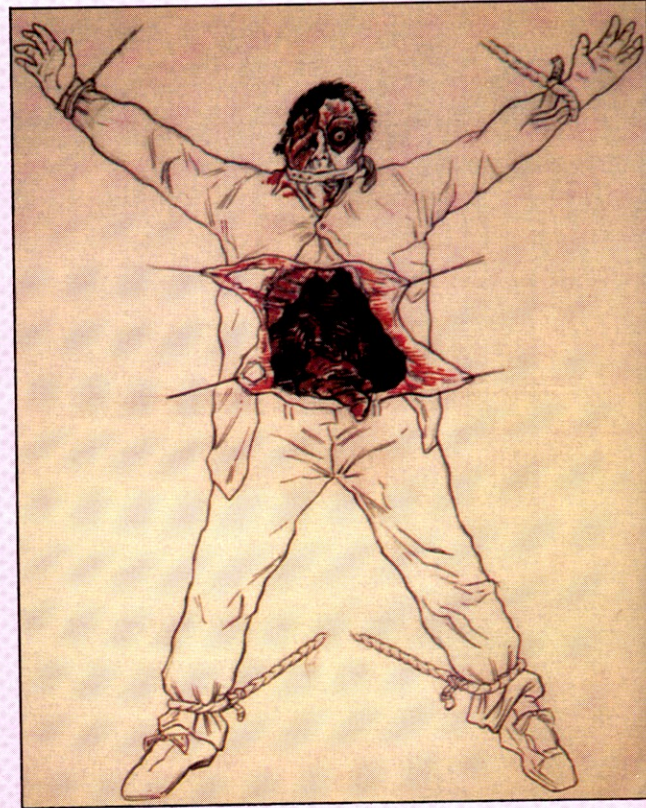
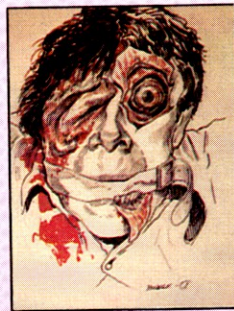
For the design of Lector's high-security cell, Zea used two sources of primary inspiration. "It was based on Francis Bacon—there was a painting he did where there's this fellow sitting in the middle of a dark space and you see the

light from above shining down on this guy, and it's all very grey and strange; you don't really see his face, you see his mouth open in a scream. And there was also a photograph from the Nuremberg trials of a space with cells on both sides, double height. The room is cavernous, with a catwalk around the second set of cells, and positioned at each door is a soldier, who would look in



Officers Boyle (Charles Napier) and Pembry (Alex Coleman), the subjects of Lector's and Zea's handiwork.





Grand guignol variations on a theme, sketches of Officer Boyle's torment at the hands of escaped psychopath Hannibal "the Cannibal" Lector, including details for a closeup shot of the mutilated head.

Prepared by the design team supervised by Kristi Zea, such sketches were necessary for director Jonathan Demme to determine what the audience should be shown, and how much—or thankfully—how little.

very expensive decision, because Plexiglas isn't cheap, but I think it was very successful."

To visually complete the bank analogy, a sliding, drive-thru teller drawer was installed to function as Lector's sole link to the world. "I wanted there to be this BANG! that we could really hear," said Zea. "We used real metal in it. That was the other thing, obviously, the walls were molded fiberglass that were treated a million times to get that look, but wherever possible we used real metal. We used real metal bars on all the other inmates' cells, and real metal for the drawer. It just has a different clang to it, the whole method of pushing and pulling it is different. And I think that we needed that kind of reality."

When it came to serial killer Jame Gumb's environment, and to developing the "look" to his twisted lifestyle, Zea relied upon the details of a now-familiar prototype, "The book about Ed Gein [*Deviant*] gave me a lot of clues as to . . . not so much the psychology behind

why he's killing—that doesn't interest me—as much as the space that he's living in, how he deals with everyday life. Does he have a toothbrush on the sink? What does his kitchen look like? I don't mean to minimize death, but when you thumb through the book about Gein, you get to these series of photographs, and the thing that was most horrifying to me was what his kitchen looked like. It was the dirtiest, most disgusting thing I think I've

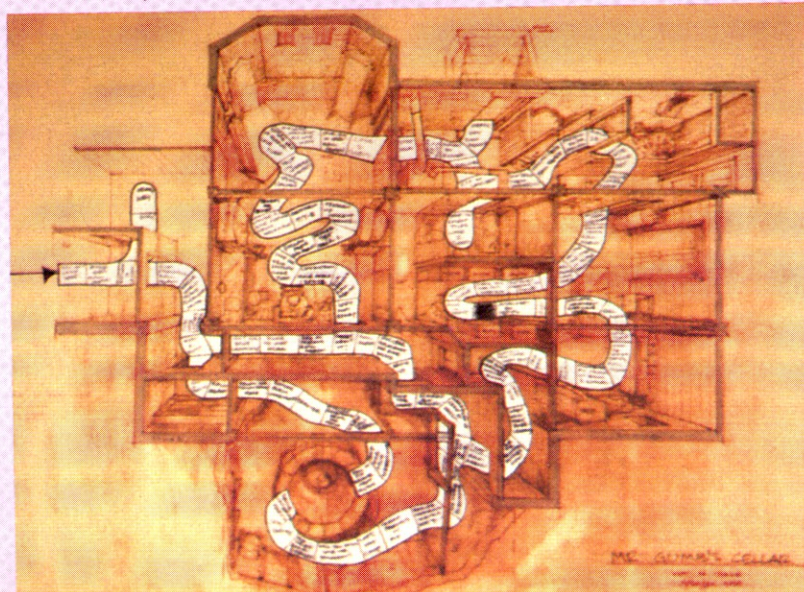
seen. That a person could live in that kind of filth said something to me about that guy. I think that's true about Buffalo Bill, too. It's what his life is like.

"We were very painstaking about it. We wanted to pull into it the idea that he loved his moths; his moths were in perfect shape; his little moth kingdom was . . . was beautiful. He was very, very careful about how he skinned his victims, so the room where [he kept] all his skinning equipment was metic-

ulously clean. His sewing room was his fantasy room. Sometimes the suggestion of things was more terrifying than if you were to ever describe to anyone what they were. You see these mannequins with all these leather outfits on and you think, 'Why the hell are those there? What did he do with them?'"

Looking back at the outcome, Zea admits that the intensity of her material—particularly relating to Dr. Lector's handiwork—surprised not only herself, but also seasoned Corman alumnus Demme. "If you think about it," said Zea, "[Lector] would never have the time to actually do what he did, up in that room. But I kept saying, 'We're not into reality, here. This guy isn't real. We're dealing with someone bigger than life, more evil than anything we could ever conceive of. So let's push it, let's go that extra twenty-five percent and do something that people are going to gasp at.' [Demme] said, 'Well . . . they're going to gasp at *this*, Kristi.'" □

To choreograph the gripping climax, as Clarice stalks Gumb in his labyrinthine basement, Zea had a floor plan drawn, based on the book, dubbed "Gumb the Game" by the filmmakers.



T H E G R I M B U S I N E S S

“At the dailies we’d sit and watch poor Catherine screaming. It’s awful to sit for hours while some poor person is screaming. Well, it wasn’t for hours. It just seemed like hours.”

of Gumb’s basement, there was the occasional glitch. “[The Westinghouse plant] was just an enormous space, you could walk forever in it,” recalled director of photography Tak Fujimoto. “And it was *cold* in there. Freezing—probably colder inside than it was outside. You know, once you start shooting, all the heaters have to be shut off because of the sound. And the filming can go on for hours and hours and hours, so the heaters don’t come back on again. It’s hard—actors get cold, they get tired. *Everybody* gets cold and tired.”

Zea agreed. “It was a nightmare for production. It wasn’t a soundstage, and there were trains passing by outside all the time, and when it rained you could hear it. And it was cold. It was *so* cold. We had space heaters, but you couldn’t hear yourself think when they were on. It was one of the coldest winters that Pittsburgh had ever had. The poor people in construction had to stand in front of heaters to mix paint. They’d be hammering with their coats and hats on. It was very tough.”

In a different fashion, the corpse examined by Crawford and Starling during filming on location in a Clay County, West Virginia funeral home—a living, breathing actress—presented its own problem: how to keep the woman living and breathing while shooting the close-up of a cocoon being plucked from her throat. It was moth wrangler and stylist Ray Mendez who came up with the solution, molding the cocoon from a dough of specially



Clarice stalks Gumb (Ted Levine) in his lair. Though patterned on the case of Wisconsin ghoul Ed Gein, Demme gave Gumb’s upstairs an air of normalcy.

colored Tootsie Roll and producing a prop that could be easily swallowed, had the emergency arisen.

Once shooting started, the grim nature of the material occasionally took its toll. Said Zea, “Only in a couple of instances were we bothered by what we were doing. Whenever we were in the pit, I think those were days when we were bothered most. I think all the females on the crew were bothered by it. At the dailies, we’d sit and watch poor Catherine [played by actress Brooke

Smith] screaming. You know, it’s actually awful to sit in dailies for hours while some poor person is screaming her head off. Well... it wasn’t for hours, it just *seemed* like hours.”

As director of photography, Tak Fujimoto explained that, beyond his own personal goal of staying warm enough to function, his responsibilities on the shoot were essentially low-profile, calling for him to keep both eyes *and* ears open to the director’s desires: “We really don’t talk an awful lot

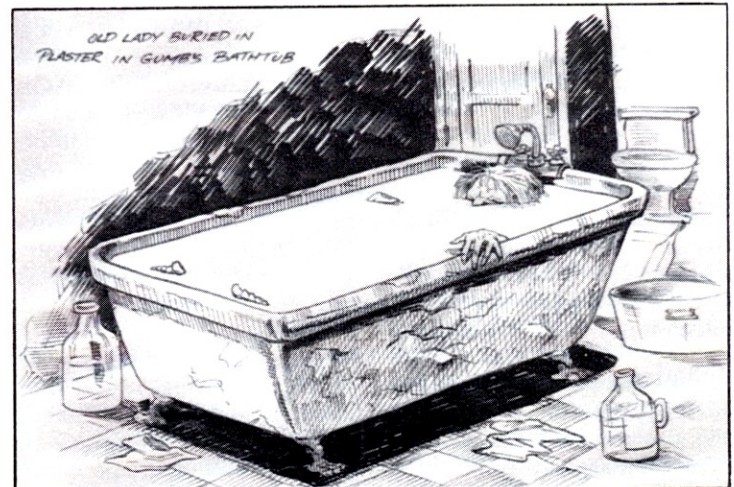
about the movie. I get most of my information from his conversations with the production designer. When we started working on *SILENCE OF THE LAMBS*, he had this idea that the whole picture was going to be full of huge close-ups. But mostly it was just him talking to other people and me listening.”

Having been with Demme from the very start of his directing career, Fujimoto said he’d seen a definite growth in the director’s skills. “His visual knowledge has grown by leaps and bounds. In the beginning, you’d suggest things to him. But he’s grown so much as a visual director that it’s really fascinating. From 1974 to now, he’s matured into a really full-blown director’s director. He knows what he’s doing and what he wants, he knows how the movie’s going to be. He’s much more in command now, much more forceful about what he wants to see and what he wants to do and the shots that he wants and how he wants to approach scenes. In that way, things are a little more channeled now than they were say ten, fifteen years ago. He’s always had an interest in people, for openers, and he’s just a really wonderful guy to be with. He treats people in a sort of democratic way—everybody on the crew is an equal. His approach is open, there aren’t any artificial barriers between him and everybody else, he just treats everybody really well. And it comes across in his movies.”

Demme himself acknowledged the symbiotic relation-

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Downstairs was another matter, with the image of an old lady, rotting in a tub in Gumb’s basement (left). The design (right), suggests that the corpse is encased in plaster.





CONFESSIONS OF A "MOTH WRANGLER"

For naturalist Ray Mendez, moth makeup, costuming and coaxing critters to hit their marks was all in a day's work.

By Dan Persons

There's no pressure at Ray Mendez's New York apartment. In one corner, an affectionate lizard scrabbles at the glass front of its cage, and will not settle down until it receives a pet and a cuddle from its owner. In the background, an entire ant colony goes about its business within a set of open trays, the danger of escape defied only by a Teflon-like substance that lines the rims. There is no attempt by Mendez to thrust such creatures in a visitor's face, nor is there any of the wild-eyed avidity one automatically expects from people with an avowed affection towards the earth's more cold-blooded inhabitants. Mendez is at ease amongst these critters, and wants you to be, too.

That's a healthy trait from one whose professed goal is the expansion of humankind's understanding of the insect and reptile world. Indeed, while within the film industry Mendez has gained a reputation as a man who, among other credits, sculpted the leathery, pock-marked egg for the ALIEN poster (a model scarcely larger than an open hand) and overran a penthouse apartment with 5000 cockroaches for CREEPSHOW, Mendez harbors as much if not more, enthusiasm for his educational design work—work that includes installations for such sites as the Philadelphia Zoo and the Smithsonian Institution.

It was his work for the



Foster examines Mendez's handiwork, a moth pupae recovered from the throat of Gumb's victim. Inset: The pupae as it is opened, rigged to ooze.

Smithsonian that brought Mendez to the attention of director Jonathan Demme. "I was designing the new insect zoo for the Museum of Natural History in Washington—that's the Smithsonian," said Mendez. "They knew about CREEPSHOW and they knew about my TV work, so when [representatives for SILENCE OF THE LAMBS] came to them and said, 'Are you interested in doing a movie?' they said, 'Oh, we know a guy who can make the moth do anything you want.' That was Sally Love, who's also credited as one of the consultants on the movie.

"They called and sent me the script, and I read it and outlined it, and then we met. I didn't know who Jonathan Demme was. I've spent too much time working in the lab

to go out and meet anyone. Demme's such a regular person—it wasn't like I was meeting the Great Director—we just got together and discussed the project."

Mendez's audition for the job was the transformation—through costuming—of a common Tomato Horn Worm into the more exotic Death's Head Moth. It was a test Mendez passed with ease, in the process saving the production the effort and expense that would have accompanied the import of the real insect. With that success, Mendez—along with his assistant Leanore Drogin—became the film's official Moth Wrangler and Stylist, responsible not only for the moths, but for all onscreen appearances of anything even remotely insectile.

Mendez's duties ran from

keeping cocooned moths ready for their birth scenes, to sculpting the numerous dummy cocoons used in the forensics sequences, to importing from specialized ranches and biological distributors throughout the country the moths, butterflies and beetles that flutter and scuttle throughout the film. All told, the wrangler devoted about two months to the production. "I feel that preparation is everything," he said. "I had to make sure the harnesses were going to work and the bugs were going to hatch, because it's not the kind of thing where we can call another dog in or have backup dogs—we're hatching animals. If the temperature drops, they don't hatch—so you don't shoot. You want to make sure you're not put in the position where that happens. We were very well prepared. We had everything worked out before we went down to Pittsburgh."

One of the more crucial of Mendez's challenges was developing a method of getting moths from their supplier to the shooting site in Pittsburgh. "Moths are nocturnal," said Mendez. "If you think about transporting moths from one location to the other—putting them in a box and shipping them there in the dark—by the time they've arrived, their wings would be beaten to shreds. So we tried to figure out how to get them from one place to the other. I thought, 'Well, based on the fact I've got a nocturnal insect and I want to bring it from North Carolina to



Mendez and his flying charges. Pictured are the common Tomato Horn Worm Moth, harvested for use in the film in North Carolina, transported to Pittsburgh and costumed (inset) as the rare Death's Head Moth.



Pittsburgh and I want to bring a lot of them—several hundred at a time—how am I going to do it? What we did was we booked the bulkhead seat on a flight going back and forth—I flew down the first time, and after that one of the people on-set flew back to get [more]. We went to the lab, transferred the moths to a specially designed cage that had holders for them to grab onto and special venting so they wouldn't overheat and internal lighting so that when we closed the case, it was as bright as daylight inside. And we carried them everywhere like that.

"It worked great; not one single moth was damaged. We'd get them down to the set and put them into their big holding cages and they would survive four or five days and then we would get new ones.

Mendez displays his moth pupae handiwork, including one specimen (r) fashioned from a Tootsie Roll for the scene where it is plucked from the mouth of a corpse.



“You’re flying bugs around people’s heads, doing this childhood fantasy—playing with bugs—thinking ‘Somebody’s paying me to do this! Yeah, that’s right, this is a profession.’”

They were fed properly, just like they would have been in the lab, and they would mate and lay eggs in the cages, so we had *massive copulation* going on—a bug emporium of the highest order—and we would collect the eggs and send them back to the lab. Nothing was lost.”

When it came time for man to meet bug—specifically Ted Levine’s portrayal of the demented Jame Gumb ever so lovingly coaxing a newborn moth out of its cocoon—Men-

dez claimed no surprise that the actor handled the scene with such grace. “If we were doing roaches, there’s a feeling of dirt and filth and creepiness. If we were doing scorpions or tarantulas, there’s the fear of being bitten or stung. If you’re doing butterflies: you think about flowers, a pretty animal, it’s flying, it wouldn’t hurt you, it’s been used as a symbol of love. So I didn’t have to go through a long educational process with the actors saying, ‘Look, these moths are not going to attack you, they’re not going to climb in your clothes.’

“[For the birth scene.] I had to prep the moths just as they were ready to hatch. I had to put the little costume on the back and everything else, and we had them all set, 99% of the way out. And then [Levine] helped it emerge, and we had to follow that with take after take, from many angles. He had to take it out and watch the legs come out and hold it. And he had no problems at all. The only concerns were the human ones: not to squeeze too hard, not to hurt the animal, not to

drop it. He wasn’t acting *against* them. He didn’t have to open a door and see an animal on the wall and get freaked out: ‘AHHHHH!’ He just acted.”

As a result of his work on *SILENCE OF THE LAMBS*, Mendez has received escalating attention on such shows as *ENTERTAINMENT TONIGHT* and *LATE NIGHT WITH DAVID LETTERMAN*—in the latter case, an appearance that came close to sending the high-strung host screaming over the top of his false, New York skyline once Mendez began demonstrating how Native Americans originally acquired their honey from ants. After such treatment, it may be no wonder that the Moth Wrangler recalls his work for Demme with such pleasure. “They were professionals; they knew their stuff; they came in ready to go to work. It was a good crew, what can I say? Positive, positive, positive.

“This is a strange business in general. Every now and then I have flashes of, ‘Somebody’s paying me to do this!’ You’re sitting, doing this childhood fantasy, playing with bugs and making flying harnesses and going outside and they’ve got a *big* camera and they’re rolling *big* film. And you’re flying bugs around people’s heads and thinking, ‘Yeah, that’s right, *this* is a profession.’” □

DEMME ON LIGHTING

“Tak Fujimoto will come up to me between shots and ask, ‘You think we should make it go black in the background?’ I just walk away. Eventually he decides and he’s always right.”

in New York, with composer Howard Shore recording his score in Germany. Zea, in preparation for her own directorial debut (a segment of HBO’s *WOMEN AND MEN*), was invited to observe the editing process, discovering in the bargain that it isn’t always the action sequences that receive the most work: “It seemed like all of the fast-paced, moving things were really easy to do,” said Zea. “The thing that they kept getting bogged down on was the orientation. I think that Jonathan wanted to keep everything very much in close-ups. I can remember he and Craig [McKay, the editor] having a discussion at one point where [Demme] said, ‘I don’t care if people are a little confused about where they are.’ I can remember saying on occasion, ‘Well, you still need a master of this.’ or ‘I put the establishing shot in of the mental institution, because no one’s going to figure out where they are.’ ‘I don’t care if they don’t know where they are. That’s gonna turn them even more on their heads!’ I think that that was one of the things Jonathan played with continually, that sense of orientation, where you were in a space. And I think it works very effectively, that half the time you are brought into the extreme close-

ups before you’re given the sense of the space where you are.”

Added producer Ed Saxon, “At first, I hankered for every medium shot. I thought—and I told this to Jonathan—that he was really taking a big chance; it’s typical that, as a producer, you wonder about these things. And, boy, he knew what he was doing. He’s a very good producer in his own right.”

There were similar trepidations about the sequence that opens the film’s finale—where, as scripted by Ted Tally, cross-cutting leads the audience to believe that Crawford has successfully tracked Gumb to his lair. As a precaution, Demme and company provided themselves with several options for the editing of the scene. “We planned and shot it,” said Saxon, “in such a way that we had the option of creating it in the cutting room or doing it in a more straightforward way, in which you watch the house being broken into, realize he [Gumb] isn’t there, and then [Starling] knocks. But Jonathan and Craig worked very hard in the cutting room and made the intercutting work. I wasn’t very worried about that—I knew we had a lot of options.”

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The face of fear: Lt. Boyle (Charles Napier) and Ofc. Murray (Brent Hinkley) transporting Lecter. Left: Demme selects a take on video during filming.



After 65 days of shooting, *SILENCE OF THE LAMBS* finished in early March, 1990, going only three or four days over schedule. The final sequence to be shot was that of Dr. Lecter stalking the fleeing Dr. Chilton to his hiding place on the island of Bimini. “Bimini was the culmination of all of our efforts,” said Zea. “We built an absolutely adorable little *casita* [a bar] that’s out by the airport where the plane comes in, and we never saw it in the final film. My one sadness is that we never saw the full elevation of this great little building. But we were down there for three weeks in the sun and it was just divine . . . That was the last day of the filming, and it was very exciting to be down in this warm, tropical place after being so cold and so dark and so dismal in Pittsburgh.”

Post-production took place

ship that exists between him and his director of photography, while admitting that he views the exchange in a slightly different light: “Tak Fujimoto will come up to me between shots and say, ‘You think we should let everything go black in the background, make it unrealistic completely? Or keep a little bit of the presence of the room there?’ And it’s like, *God, I can’t . . . I’m not sure! If we’re in so close, maybe it won’t matter, but hmmm, yes the limbo thing . . .* The only thing to do then is just walk away from him. Eventually, he decides it should all go black in the background. And, of course, he’s absolutely right.”

As for *SILENCE OF THE LAMBS*’s visual style, Fujimoto held that his and Demme’s major goal was to downplay it as much as possible: “I don’t think we’ve ever been Gee-Whiz kind of boys,” said Fujimoto. “I think we’ve always tried to put the goods before the audience and just show it to them without being overly dramatic about it. After the first few days or so, you watch the film and you have a sort of a flavor of what the movie’s going to be like. After a while, the movie starts to take on a life of its own and things fall into place.”

A discarded moth-in-spiderweb design concept for Lt. Boyle’s mutilated body. Below: A design for the “Shot from Hell’s” evocative back lighting.





SCRIPTING THE BESTSELLER

The adaptation of Thomas Harris' horror novel stuck close to the book.

By Dan Persons

The first two drafts of Ted Tally's screenplay adaptation of *The Silence of the Lambs* are prefaced with a note describing how, "for legal reasons," the names of some major characters have been altered. Throughout the text of these drafts, Lector is forever known as Dr. Quinn, while FBI agent Jack Crawford became Ray Campbell and Dr. Frederick Chilton of the Baltimore State Hospital

for the Criminally Insane is renamed Dr. Herbert Prentiss. (Perhaps not coincidentally, those are the three characters *SILENCE OF THE LAMBS* shares with the Dino DeLaurentiis produced *MAN-HUNTER*, also known as *Red Dragon*.) While the note goes on to express both Tally's and Harris' hopes that the original names will be restored, for the time running from June through July of 1989—when these drafts were finished—some of the film's major characters were forced to work under aliases.

Aside from name changes, though, the differences between what Tally first set on paper and what wound up on screen are surprisingly few. Whole sequences, including many of Clarice's confrontations with Dr. Lector, show up in almost identical versions to what appears in the film. The nightmarish visions of Gumb's basement are virtually intact; so is the exploration of the storeroom of Lector alias "Hester Mofet" (here located at "Split City Mini-Storage"), where Starling finds a head in a jar. Even the cutting of the Calumet City raid—where events occurring in two locations are melded so that they appear to happen in one—is explicitly described.

Still, there are some differences. The



Flashbacks got trimmed, Foster with Masha Skorobogatov and Jeffrie Lane as Young Clarice and her dad.

ordering of incidents changes subtly from draft to draft, as Tally strove to find ways of defining both character and plot through the events of the story. The first draft includes not only the search of Frederica Bimmel's bedroom, but also of Catherine Martin's apartment. And it is at this site that Starling discovers a hidden cache of nude photos. In the early drafts, the cutaways to Gumb's basement are presented in a slightly different order, waiting only

for the addition of some yet-to-be scripted sequences—those of Gumb coaxing a moth out of its cocoon and of him doing his video dance—to snap the Buffalo Bill plotline into sync with the rest of the film.

Tally's desire to be faithful to the book occasionally trips him up. There is an attempt to introduce Crawford's wife into the scenario, showing how her illness affects the agent's decisions. There are also attempts to further elaborate the relationship between Crawford and Starling, including a visit to the Smithsonian that has both agents present when entomologists Pilcher and Roden unveil the death's head moth.

And there are several original plot devices that may have worked for other directors, but that Demme apparently deemed unnecessary. Voiceovers are used throughout to provide scene transitions, a few instances of which remain in the film. Heavy emphasis is placed on Clarice's flashbacks to her childhood, all the way to the inclusion of a recurring dream sequence that introduces Lector into the agent-trainee's vision of the slaughtered lambs. There's a subplot that attempts to place both Starling's and Crawford's careers at risk, a risk with so little dramatic impact that one line of dialogue wipes it

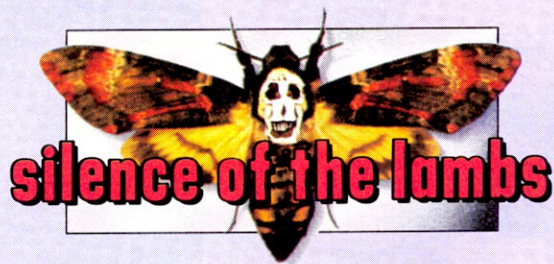


Hopkins as Lector, the mad artist. In the early scripts the character was called "Dr. Quinn."

away. And there's a dramatically awkward meeting between Starling and Senator Ruth Martin, where the politician accuses the agent of ensuring her daughter's death.

By draft four, dated October, 1989, Demme has taken charge, and his influence begins to show. An opening hostage rescue has been dropped in favor of the meeting in Crawford's office; Crawford's wife is nowhere mentioned; and the redundant search of Catherine Martin's apartment is gone (although the nude Polaroid stills are also, temporarily, lost). Still remaining is Starling's final, Lector-inhabited dream sequence, as well as the flashback visuals of her story of the night she ran away. Also fortunately missing is the first and second draft's broader interpretation of the completed film's fade-out, originally presented as a scene in which a penknife-wielding Lector stands before a trussed-up Dr. Chilton and sighs, "Shall we begin?"

Yet to come are the smaller touches: Starling's driven, solitary run through the Quantico obstacle course, those Polaroids of Frederica. Even without them, what can be seen from Tally's early drafts is quite clearly the work of a writer who understood from the start the material on-hand, and how to go about translating it for the screen. In light of the scripts that go through an infinity of rewrites and an army of authors (in the process keeping mediators at the Writer's Guild very, very busy), Tally's singular effort stands as one of the most faithful, and successful, screen translations in recent years. □



MAKEUP EFFECTS BEHIND-THE-SCENES

Artists Carl Fullerton and Neal Martz provided the realism of a pathologist's report.

By Dan Persons

SILENCE OF THE LAMBS represents the first collaboration between director Jonathan Demme and makeup effects experts Carl Fullerton and Neil Martz. Speaking from his New Jersey workshop, Fullerton recalled the research that went into his work for the film, and the mood that drove the creation of the effects, "I read the book, and also a book called *Deviant*, which I guess a lot of films have been influenced by. That's basically about this man in the midwest who started out by going into graveyards and digging up caskets. He would take off peoples faces and genitalia and breasts and run around at night wearing the body parts and skins.

Actually, I think *PSYCHO* was loosely based on his case, as well. [The subject of the non-fiction *Deviant* was indeed Ed Gein, the inspiration for Robert Bloch to write *Psycho*.] It was interesting to get the background. It was all approached from a very clinical, almost antiseptic point of view. Neil and I did the bodies for *GORKYPARK* some time ago and that was quite similar in representation."

Production designer Kristi Zea agreed that the Fullerton/Martz quest for accuracy benefitted the film immensely, even if it brought her occasional periods of consternation. "I'd be saying things like,



Sgt. Pembry (Alex Coleman), mutilated but still alive after Lector's escape from his holding cell, makeup designed and applied by Carl Fullerton.

'Well, it's got to look like he's been butchered,' and [Fullerton would] say, 'I need drawings. I need to understand what you're talking about.' So I would have Natalie [Wilson, one of the assistant art directors] go off to the picture collection and get me pictures of slaughtered calves and veal and butchering techniques and tannings and skinnings. We'd come up with a concept and send it off to Carl and he'd come back with some drawings and then we'd say, 'not so much dripping,' and 'a little less gook,' and 'more of this,' and 'less of that.'

"He's brilliant," said Zea of Fullerton, a student of Dick

Smith who was nominated for an Oscar for his prosthetic makeup of Joel Grey in *REMO WILLIAMS: THE ADVENTURE BEGINS* (1988). "The great thing about him is that you can talk in detail about this stuff in a way that you would never do normally. He'd say, 'Well, how do you want this split? Do you want it down to the belly button, or do you want it down to the pelvis? How many ribs do you want to see?' I'd say, 'Well, let's see three or four ribs and yeah; it should go down to the belly button, and have it open and have the flesh hanging on the sides . . .'" Zea laughed. "People would walk into the office and they'd hear me on the phone and they'd say, 'Oh God, she's on with Carl.'"

For both Fullerton and Martz, as well as their assistants Todd Kleitsch and Vincent Altamore, the film represented a welcome departure from the cartoon-like explicitness of too many recent films. Said Fullerton, "We had an advisor there on the set who was a forensic pathologist—I believe he was from the FBI. And we had an awful lot of research. This man brought with him his own personal experience, to the point of doing the final touches on the set. He gave Neil and I a lot of input. As far as adhering to reality, we tried to get as close as we could without using a real, dead body." Added Martz,



LECTOR'S CARNAGE

“We usually strive for realism. When they hung the mannequin, and they actually played the music, that will always stick in my mind,” said Martz. “That was like, ‘Whoa!’”

“Carl and I usually strive for realism, and we did it again for this film. We knew we were dead-on when they brought in an FBI agent who had dealt with washed-up bodies to critique our work, and he said that we had it pretty much right-on.”

While both Fullerton and Martz were reluctant to discuss the exact apportioning of responsibility on the shoot, they did make an exception in the case of Lector's breakout. “We both have a tendency to collaborate on everything we do when we're working together,” said Fullerton. “Meaning that if we like what the other person's doing we'll say that, and if we don't like what the other person is doing, we'll say that as well. That's not always an easy thing to find with a business partner. I would say that the majority of the face rip-offs and some of the photographs—the cadavers, or ‘floaters,’ they're called—were pretty much done by

THE SHOT FROM HELL, as it was referred to by cast and crew, featured Martz's dummy of actor Charles Napier as Lt. Boyle (detail, below), dressed moth-like by Lector, the antic artist.



the two of us, and the hanging body in the cage [Officer Boyle] was basically handled by Neil.” (In contrast, Martz accorded all credit for the ripped-off facial “mask” of Officer Pembry to Fullerton.)

Martz can well remember his first reaction upon seeing the savaged corpse of Officer Boyle trussed up in its patriotic bunting and suspended from the exterior of Lector's cell. A mind-blowing image on film, it was no less impressive in real life. “When they hung the mannequin, and they actually played the music, that will always stick in my mind. That was like, ‘Whoa!’” It apparently stuck in a lot of crew members' minds. Around the production, the first sight of the corpse revealed past the frosted glass doors became known as “The Shot from Hell.”

According to Fullerton, the scene's companion effect, that of a similarly mutilated, but still living, Officer Pembry prone on the floor (actually Dr. Lector sporting a human-flesh “mask”), achieved its success as much through effective casting as through makeup design. “In the sense of disguising the Anthony Hopkins character, when he takes off that guy's face, hopefully that's somewhat of a surprise. And we were lucky enough to have a wonderful body type in order to get away with that gag. Anthony Hopkins is a very specific body type. He's a very broad, barrel-chested man—he's in pretty decent shape and he's a formidable character to look at, as just a large, 180 pound piece of flesh coming at you. Perhaps he's even bigger than that. So the actor that had to, on the floor, represent Hopkins with the mask over his face had to be almost identical to Anthony Hopkins' body type. And luckily, they found a person like that. Otherwise, I'm not sure we would have gotten



Starling views the horror of one of Buffalo Bill's skinned victims during an autopsy. For heightened realism, makeup artists Fullerton and Martz (inset right) hired actresses to wear the makeup of frustrated tailor Jame Gumb's slaughtered victims, providing Demme staging flexibility.



Carl Fullerton



Neal Martz

away with it."

For the corpses of Gumb's flayed victims, Fullerton and Martz rejected the use of dummies and relied instead upon living actors under makeup. Said Fullerton of the still-unorthodox technique, "It has to do with perception of when you see skin, and when you see meat, and when you see fat, and when you see viscera, and when you see the body fluids. Many people would have chosen to use dummies. I feel a dummy should be used only when you can't use a real body. Neal and I always [push for the] use of a real body, because [with a dummy] you just don't get the flow of the fat and the muscle as you do when you've got a real person on the table. If you make a dummy, it can't move. You're making it in a shop someplace, and if it was designed to a table they were going to use, or to one position, it would be one thing. But that's never the case. It always has to go on a different table, it always has to conform to what the director and the cameraman want to see, and rightly so."

For the grisly forensic and newspaper stills that crop up repeatedly throughout the film, Fullerton and Martz staged their own, little location shoot. Said Fullerton, "Some of the still photography was done in my backyard.

Other stills were shot on the Palisades Parkway, down by the Hudson River. And the rest were shot in Pittsburgh." Said Martz of the actresses' reactions to being turned into so much dead flesh, "All the girls were pretty good about it. In fact, they were *very* good. Their first introduction to us was when they had to come down, take off their clothes and be cast. Of course, we'd cover them up as best we could, but we still had to cast body parts, and they were very good about that. And then I'm sure they were a little embarrassed when they had to lay out in New Jersey in different spots, but they were really terrific. Once girl was by Carl's pond and it was freezing cold outside, and she just let him take the pictures and was very cooperative."

The results have been almost universally acclaimed for their

unsettling reality. Yet, as Kristi Zea remembered, the Fullerton/Martz adherence to accuracy occasionally ran contrary to the horror Demme was seeking: "He [Fullerton], like all of us, wanted to start with something as real as possible. His decision to use actors just made it that much more real. When the bodysuit [Gumb had sewn together] arrived, we had all kinds of ins-and-outs about that. It looked too beautiful. The first bodysuit was a complete latex form and it looked, for all intents and purposes, like real flesh. You could see the little goosebumps—it was that sensitive a rendering. We looked at it hanging on this mannequin, and it wasn't awful enough. It was sort of alabaster and pretty. So I said, 'You know, what we really need to do is we need to have more seams, like [Gumb's] put it together from different

skin types, *He* thinks it's beautiful, but we don't. *He* thinks he's done a work of art, but we don't. So this should be a lot more ugly.'

"[Fullerton] would color different skin places different colors, and then Jonathan would look at it and say, 'It's still too nice. We don't want anyone to think that this is a great thing to be doing.' And I remember [Fullerton] had to fly back in—sort of an emergency kind of thing—because again we looked at it in dailies and it was still looking too nice. We were going to reshoot it. So he came back to color it and make it a little more awful." In the end, those emergency flights were for naught: only the quickest glance of the bodysuit remains in the film.

If such reverses caused Fullerton any pain, he does not bring it up in conversation. In fact, both artists regard the film as the ideal showcase for their work. Said Martz, "For a makeup artist like myself, it was surprising that [Demme] used everything and used it well, where it was just enough so you could really see it and then it goes. On *THE COTTON CLUB* I made a dummy for the film's stabbing. It took me five weeks to make this remote-control mannequin, and if it's three frames in the film, it's a lot—it was edited out because it was too gross. But Jonathan Demme just, to me, used those things perfectly. You got to see the photos in the front; not enough of them, but just to get the image of it. The cadaver on the table, that was perfect because you could really see the horror of what this man was doing. It's hard for an artist to evaluate his own work, but I'm sure when people saw this thing, they went, 'Ohhhhhhhh...'" □

Lector in Pembry's face mask, about to attack ambulance orderly Josh Broder. Below: The unmasking. A gag enhanced by the resemblance of actors Hopkins and Alex Coleman, noted Fullerton.



The final cut was completed in October, 1990. Based on the reaction of preview audiences—who found the pace of the film too slow at points—some additional trims were made. Among those segments hitting the cutting room floor were sequences that further developed the relationship between Demme mentor Roger Corman as FBI director Hayden Burke (an ironic bit of casting, considering Corman's tendency, in films such as *WILD ANGELS*, to take the outlaw's side over that of the forces of order); what now remains of the character is a telephone conversation between Burke and Crawford, where they discuss the deal Dr. Chilton has made with Lector.

With Kevin Costner's *DANCES WITH WOLVES* already slated for a November opening, and with the filmmaker's approval, Orion postponed *SILENCE OF THE LAMBS*'s debut until February, 1991 (everyone no doubt relieved that there'd be no mingling of *WOLVES* and *LAMBS*). After four months of advanced publicity, the film opened strong, reaching the number one slot the first weekend, and continued doing big business at the boxoffice. Such popularity has only proved ironic for Orion Pictures, a company that—after having dug itself into a \$500 million hole with a long line of unprofitable productions—could do with four more films like Costner's and Demme's.

not all the critics have been unanimous in their praise. In addition to a steady chorus of superlatives, there have been a few voices decrying the film's unsettling violence, and the seductive evil of the preternaturally intelligent Dr. Lector. One critic, the *Chicago Tribune*'s Dave Kehr, went all the way to accuse Demme of betraying his own body of work, abandoning a more "democratic" filmmaking style for *SILENCE OF THE LAMBS*'s grim, manipulative *mise-en-scene* (apparently the critic had wandered into the lobby for popcorn during the entire, unsettling third act of *SOMETHING WILD*).

Said Demme, in response to

DEMME ON HORROR

“I think a good, scary movie is a wonderful kind of release. When I see something that scares me so much that I actually scream—like *THE EXORCIST*—I come out feeling better.”



Demme and Foster pose with the producers of *SILENCE OF THE LAMBS* (l to r), Ron Bozman, Kenneth Utt, also the film's unit production manager, and Ed Saxon.

his critics, “You musn't make me responsible for America's glorification of serial killers. I did some interviews in connection with *SILENCE OF THE LAMBS*, and consistently with the European press the question kept coming up of why America is so obsessed with serial killers. I feel that serial killers are perhaps on a level with Dan Quayle and George Bush: they are able to strike *terror* in the hearts of all of us. We know that all of our lives are, on the one hand, very much at the mercy of George Bush and Dan Quayle while, on the other hand, we're also at the mercy of serial killers who might pick any of us as their next victim. These are very immediate figures of terror—I'd rather not think about any of them. But if you do think about them, and if you think about them long enough, you're going to be frightened of them.

“I know this from my children: at a very young age you start requesting [stories that are going to scare you]. The idea of being scared by stories becomes, for many people, a special kind of favor. I know

it's true of my kids and their friends—they *want* the scary stories. I know as I grew up, I loved horror movies. To this day, I feel there's a certain kind of catharsis available from being *truly* terrified in a movie. When I see something like *ALIEN* or *THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE*, or *THE EXORCIST*—something that scares me so much that I actually scream—I come out feeling better. I've tried to figure it out. I think that

maybe we get so much anxiety and dread built up throughout the week from what we hear on the news, what we hear happens to our friends and our family, what we read in the newspapers, all these dreadful things going on. So I think a good, scary movie is a wonderful kind of release.

“The trouble is I think that serial killers [have become part of] a tradition that includes Dracula and other things that scare us. You know, serial killers are the subjects of a lot of TV specials and a certain amount of movies and what have you. But they're also a very real kind of problem in this country and many countries. It's a problem that is directly related to child abuse, which is an issue that *SILENCE OF THE LAMBS* didn't have time to get into, unfortunately. Every serial killer is someone who's suffered a profoundly abused childhood. Many abused children turn out to be wonderfully sensitive people. Serial killers go the other way. What was done to them was so grievous that it made them hate themselves and hate everybody else. This is an oversimplification, please don't nail me on it, but there's a certain kind of truth to it. And as long as we live in a society that tolerates child abuse, we're going to have more and more serial killers.”

Possibly as disturbing to the progressive Demme were the accusations levelled at him and the film by several gay groups, who felt the character of Jame Gumb—with his overcherished poodle, Precious, his

Ted Levine as serial killer Jame “Buffalo Bill” Gumb, doing his fantasy dance.



pierced nipple, and his seductive, emasculated dance before the video camera—bordered uncomfortably close to stereotype. Said producer Ed Saxon, in response to the charge, “It’s an overreaction based on an extraordinary social problem, which is the intolerance of alternative, sexual lifestyles. But it *is* an overreaction, because I don’t think Jame Gumb is conventionally sexual *in any way*—gay, straight, anything. He is an aberrant personality. There have been straight and gay serial murderers—this guy’s neither.”

Said production designer Kristi Zea, “When I first read the story I thought to myself, ‘Is this homophobic?’ In fact, I had serious conversations with some of my gay friends, some of whom I’d hoped were going to work on the film with me. It’s very, very clear in the story that this man is not a homosexual, he’s not a transvestite, he’s not a transsexual. He is a seriously disturbed man who hates himself and wants to be beautiful.

“My feeling about it is that I think it’s an oversimplification to say that this film is homophobic. This character is not a homosexual. I think it’s a shame that people have gotten that confused. The theory behind the idea that he wants to be a woman is that he thinks women are beautiful, and he thinks he is ugly—that’s what it is. I don’t think that that really has anything to do with homosexuality. I’m sad that that has happened. I don’t know if there’s anything we

Ted Levine as Jame Gumb, half of Thomas Harris’ serial killer one-two punch in *SILENCE OF THE LAMBS*.



HANNIBAL LECTOR’S HORROR PEDIGREE

A phenomenon with a long lineage in the annals of crime scenes both real and fictional.

By Thomas Doherty

In *Red Dragon*, filmed in 1986 by Michael Mann as *MANHUNTER*, and *The Silence of the Lambs*, former crime reporter, Thomas Harris, hit it big with two novel encounters with a carnivorous psychiatrist, Jonathan Demme’s blockbuster screen version of the latter (clocking in with a domestic gross of \$130 million and counting) may not be enough to save faltering Orion Pictures from crashing to earth, but it’s placed both Harris books on the *New York Times* best seller list and its author on the Hollywood A-list. With Hannibal Lector—psychic surfer, gourmet cook, and remorseless killer—Harris has the hottest literary/motion picture property since Rambo leaped barechested from David Morrell’s *First Blood*. Move Harris’ asking price for screen rights of the next novel one decimal place to the right.

The movies have been kind to the Lector twin pack mainly because Harris’ cinematic exposition has been kind to them. The scaffolding is so sturdy, the forward thrust of the narrative so compelling, that only a moron (or a mad *auteur* would try to take apart the rock-solid foundation. Brick by brick plotting and interior access to the space between the ears of his characters, killers and cops alike, yields an absorbing read even as the scenic cross cutting and multiple p.o.v.’s play like a made-to-order shooting script.



Lector’s creator, author Thomas Harris.

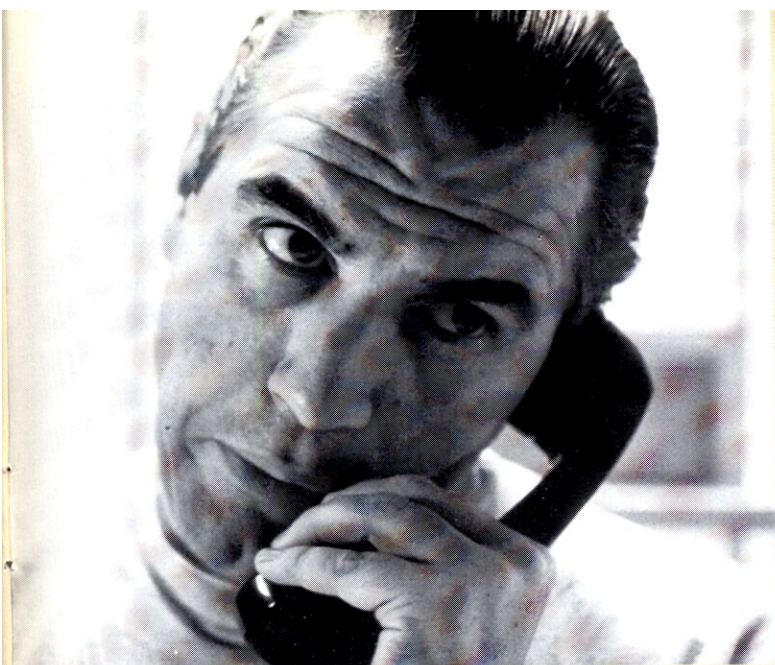
Harris’ “parallel editing” intersperses dedicated crimestoppers and serial killers. One group (troubled empath Will Graham, seasoned bureau chief Jack Crawford, and workaholic rookie Clarice Starling) marshals the elaborate resources of the modern techno-bureaucracy while the other plots depredations and commits unholy horrors in basements and workshops. The best testimony to the screen-friendly structure of the novels is that directors Michael Mann and Jonathan Demme made only strategic omissions rather than abrupt departures from the Harris blueprint. Mann, in a wise move, eliminated a post-climactic resurrection of the serial killer, a kicker that qualified as an unexpected reversal in the 1981 book but had become a hockey-masked cliché by the time of the 1986 film.

Harris’ unique variation on the crime thriller was to double the fun. He delivers not one but

two demented serial killers, what might be called “the sociopath simplex” and “the sociopath complex.” One is perverse, beyond the pale, without style—committing viciously colorful murders and bedeviling the FBI. In *Red Dragon*, he is the home-invading Tooth Fairy, in *The Silence of the Lambs*, the transvestite tailor Buffalo Bill, who slims down his victims before skinning them. The more complex killer is on the inside, behind prison bars but still in full possession of

all the psychic cards. Now a household name, Hannibal “the Cannibal” Lector is scarier because he’s smarter, more sinister because he’s more coldly calculating and willful. The Tooth Fairy and Buffalo Bill kill because they have to; Hannibal kills because he *likes* to. Already Harris’ book is receiving the sincerest form of flattery. In *BACKDRAFT*, arson investigator Robert DeNiro visits pyromaniac Donald Sutherland in jail.

Like his generic kindred, Harris hones in on police process and organizational detail, though against Lector and his ilk, the agents of moral and social order can only contain the evil, not explain it. The straightfaced prose is laden with inside dopester details (sadism towards small animals, we learn with interest, is a reliable marker and early indicator of sociopathy) and the dialogue is laced with mordant wit, (“They tried sodium amytal on Lector three years ago,”



Brian Cox played Lector first, in director Michael Mann's *MANHUNTER* (1986), retitled for NBC airing as *RED DRAGON: THE CURSE OF HANNIBAL LECTOR*.

says detective Will Graham in *Red Dragon*. "He gave them a recipe for bean dip.") No laughing matter is a knack for gruesome detail and perverse imagination that Clive Barker might blanch at. In *Red Dragon*, Harris has the Tooth Fairy bite the lips off a reporter before strapping him to a wheelchair and igniting him into a cascading ball of flame.

In both books Lector is a controlling presence, magnetic and impenetrable. Although a true one-of-a-kind (especially as incarnated by Anthony Hopkins, without whom a screen sequel seems unimaginable) Lector has a long lineage in the annals of crime scenes real and fictional. The forced perspective of the motion picture screen, however, took identification with sordid creatures to a new level of empathetic intensity. Whether the child molester in *M* or the traitor in *THE INFORMER*, a first-person camera proved that no matter how vile the protagonist, an audience will embrace the fox when the hounds are let loose. Novelist Robert Bloch's rendering of the Wisconsin death trip of culinary innovator and mass murderer Ed Gein, filmed by Alfred Hitchcock as *PSYCHO* threw the curtain back on screen killers—and found the American public gladly lending moral support to Norman Bates as he dutifully mopped up after mother.

An even colder shower of criminality was waiting by the

roadside. Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood* and Richard Brooks' brilliant 1967 screen version sketched the creature in embryo. Hitchcock's boy was at least crazy; Capote's prairie rats were just bored. Neither gangster nor psycho, the new breed of sane motiveless, unrepentant killer combined savage brutality with animal cunning. Finding orthodox Freudianism of little use, the professionals came out with a new moniker and dubbed him a "sociopath." (A sociopath becomes a serial killer when he racks up a double digit body count). Like the pod people in *INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS*, the creepy thing about these guys (and, as Harris writes, female serial killers are almost unknown in modern times) is that they bear no distinguishing sign of deviance, no mark on the back of the neck or crooked finger marking them as alien humans.

Strangely, the movies were slow to catch on to the sociopath-as-villain—far slower than the lowbrow crime mags or paperbacks. It was true crime, not screen crime, that brought the figure to public consciousness in the person of former law student Ted Bundy, handsome, well-spoken, and utterly ruthless. To serial killers what Al Capone was to gangsters, Bundy inspired fear and loathing not just for his murders but for his conscious decision to commit evil. Mark Harmon played Bundy in a

SERIAL KILLER HERO

“Motion pictures took identification with sordid creatures to a new level of empathetic intensity. No matter how vile, an audience will embrace the fox when the hounds are let loose.”

memorable TV movie, but, before *SILENCE OF THE LAMBS*, John McNaughton's *HENRY: PORTRAIT OF A SERIAL KILLER* marked the sociopath's most chilling screen appearance. Needless to say, in a *mano-a-mano* competition, the likes of Bundy, Henry, or Hannibal could, maybe literally, eat Norman Bates for breakfast.

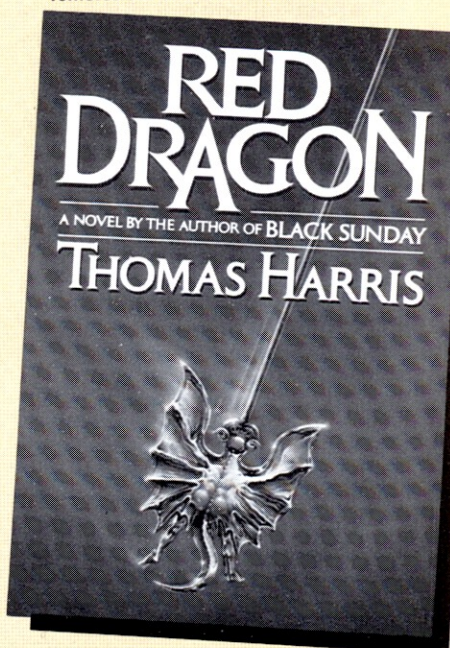
When not wandering the backroads of America picking up adolescent hitchhikers, the serial killer enlivens tabloid journalism and departments of sociology. For a time this past summer, cresting with the wave set in motion by Lector, the media locked into him as an all-purpose poster boy. On CBS's *48 HOURS*, Fox's *A CURRENT AFFAIR* and *AMERICA'S MOST WANTED*, and the cover of slick magazines, he was ubiquitous—usually staring out from behind hollow eyes *a la* Hopkins-in-character. In July, as if to satisfy the hunger of a mass media on the prowl for fresh meat, Wisconsin again served up a killer straight out of the case files of Jack Crawford's Behavioral Science Division. Jeffrey Dahmer may have inspired more sick jokes than Pee Wee Herman (favorite rock group? Fine Young Cannibals), but a lot of the laughter was whistling in the graveyard. Dahmer was an unnervingly real complement to the fictional Buffalo Bill—with no Starling or Crawford around to bring him to ground.

The author who dreamt up the nightmarish Hannibal Lector is almost as hard to pin down as one of his protagonists. Harris maintains a secretive distance from the press, and requests for an interview were turned down by a bevy of intermediaries. Neither an official biography nor the picture of Harris from the dust jacket of his latest book is available

from his publicist or agency—the latter described him as “reclusive.” Southern born and Baylor educated, Harris worked as an AP reporter before breaking out with his first novel, *Black Sunday*, a by-the-numbers thriller about a maniacal scheme to skewer a stadium full of Superbowl spectators, filmed by John Frankenheimer in 1977.

With *Red Dragon* Harris hit his stride and found his metier. He is working on another book, subject matter unknown, but if it doesn't feature prominently a connoisseur of fava beans, the man has no sense of commerce. Given the kind of material he writes, Harris' reticence is understandable. Some enthusiastic readers are best kept at the gate. For celebrity authors who specialize in the macabre, the number one fan who won't go away—cf. the harassment of Stephen King and *Misery*—is a quite real fear. Better to keep a safe distance in life from the mental cases Harris gets so close to in his books. □

The 1981 book that introduced Lector, psychic surfer, gourmet cook and remorseless killer cum movie star.



“SILENCE OF THE LAMBS turned out very well. Now my big ambition is to kick back and enjoy life a little bit, avoid serious work and have some fun with my kids and family.”



Demme rehearses Hopkins as Lector, about to take a bite out of Pembry (Alex Coleman), after macing the officer (left) during his well-planned escape.

could have done from a film point of view that would have allayed that. I know that we had taken pictures of Gumb at a striptease parlor with all these girls, and they were photographs that were around his sewing room. We never did a close-up of them—we were going to, and I think that they are included in other still-life scenes—but I don't think that it wound up in the film. And I'm not sure that would have tipped the scale.”

“I think,” concluded Saxon, “that there's a lot to be angry—and to be angry and *right* about—if you're a gay American. Gay men can be fired from their jobs in most of this country and have no legal recourse. That's shocking and terrible and scandalous. I think that we're the wrong target.”

Controversial or not, the film managed to become the first major success of 1991. Lines were long, Oscar nominations are almost a certainty (Demme is no doubt praying that, between now and December 31, no studio opens a lushly photographed drama featuring a white protagonist railing against some aspect of social injustice—he might as well pray that he and Jesse Helms

become pen pals). Even interview-shy Thomas Harris, author of the book, broke his silence just long enough to give the film his seal of approval. Word is that the writer is already at work on his next novel and that—don't worry fans—Lector will figure large in it.

Demme has not announced that he will be the one to direct that story. For him, the near-future seems to be an alternation between furious activity and blessed rest: “When we started making *SOMETHING WILD* [1985], there was this idea that it was a shame to have to start searching all over again for a script appealing enough to devote a year and a half to two years of your life to. Wouldn't it be great to find some really talented writers—a short list—and find some ideas that really attract them? So I've been doing that. I'm working with Ron Nyswaner on one

script. I'm working with Ted Tally on another; I'm working with John Sayles on a third, and I just started working with Bob Herbert, a wonderful journalist from New York, on yet another. And what I've swiftly discovered over the past few months is that it's a ludicrous thing to work on so many scripts at one time. I'm doing a lot of work to alleviate this density. If you have too many good ideas, I think you're going to go around worrying about your schedule instead of worrying about your material.

“John Sayles is adapting a book called *Fatal Voyage*. It's about the Indianapolis, this U.S. Navy vessel that sunk during the final days of World War II and went down without being able to get off an S.O.S. It's referred to in the movie *JAWS*—a thousand men wound up in the water with no one on the way to rescue them over the course of four or five days. Before they were discovered, it got whittled down to about two hundred people. It brought out the best and worst in men: what did they do when they got in the water? Within twelve hours, *hundreds* and *hundreds* of men panicked and started killing each other.

Maybe it would have happened if a thousand women went in the water... but I don't think so.

“More than anything, I have to say that *SILENCE OF THE LAMBS* has turned out very well, and I feel that I can now admit that I think the most beautiful times in life are when you can kick back and enjoy life a little bit, so that's my big ambition: to try to avoid serious work for awhile, have some fun with my kids and family.”

As for the possibility of Demme helming a *SILENCE OF THE LAMBS II*, Kristi Zea, for one, blanches at the suggestion. “I'm not an aficionado of the genre,” she said. “I love good quality thrillers, and horror is good if it's done well. The great thing about this film is that it does not push you over the edge. People come out of it and say, ‘Well, it was scary, but thank God we didn't see ...’ dah-dah-dah. I think [Demme] was very judicious about how far he was going to take the story, so that it didn't become just a bath of body parts—screams and people being skinned and gory, horrible stuff like that.

“Oh, I hope he does a comedy. I hope he does a romantic comedy set in the south of France.” □

The film's fadeout, Lector strolls up the street from the bar in Bimini, following Chilton. Below: Plans for the bar built on location, never shown fully.





JONATHAN DEMME ON HORROR

As a fan of the genre, the director explains why he took a low-key approach to filming the Thomas H. Harris shocker.

By Dan Persons

For the people who only knew Jonathan Demme from his work on such films as *MARRIED TO THE MOB* and *SOMETHING WILD*, *SILENCE OF THE LAMBS* must have come as something of a surprise. Fortunately, the director himself never had any doubts about his abilities. "Anyone who knows me knows that I enjoy well-made, scary movies a lot," said Demme. "I feel the film fits into the other stuff I've been drawn to in the past, because it's got the leading women characters way up front.

"The only reluctance I had was in reading the material on the basis of the one-line synopsis, which sounded like it really had the potential for being exploitative and clichéd. But when I read the first sentence of the book, I knew this was something fresh. We always felt—and when I say *we* I mean Ted Tally, the screenwriter, and then myself, Tak Fujimoto, the cameraman, and Kristi Zea, the production designer—we were aware that, on the one hand, we had to very much be true to the graphic nature of some of the horrible aspects of the story. Why, after all, are we making a movie from this book? On the other hand, we felt it was tremendously important that we respect the audience's imagination and their ability to fill in a lot of the more gruesome details.

"In other words, we didn't want to just slap some of the more hideous imagery in the viewers' faces. We wanted to let



Demme, directing Jodie Foster as FBI trainee Clarice Starling.

them know what was going on without compromising the dinner that they had before coming to see the movie."

It was, Demme admitted, a very fine line for a horror/suspense film to walk. "Some of the scenes we shot in slightly more graphic versions than others. For example: the discovery of the policeman who's been kind of crucified and disemboweled we shot in a variety of ways, and finally in the editing decided that the way we did it—which was to see it very briefly, fairly close, and then only in long-shot—was the way to go.

"There was no aspect of the movie that was the subject of more discussion and debate and reassessment than that very sequence . . . Just the idea of him being hung up on the bars like that—that was not in the book, nor was it in the script at that point. The book probably went into considerable detail, and then Ted Tally's screenplay described it as a

'snapshot from Hell.' I think what we decided to do was not go for a realistic, grisly, hideous dismemberment scene, but rather to stylize it."

Noted Demme, "We operated on the premise that even though we had this guy up there with his stomach falling open and an eye popping out and so on, on the one hand it was certainly a terrifying image, on the other hand it was so beyond the believable that it would give the audience an opportunity to experience the appropriate horror while resting assured that what they were seeing was not something that was likely to be seen in the so-called real world."

Not all cuts, though, were made because of their graphic nature. In the case of a scripted flashback to Starling's memories of the night of the lambs, Demme held that the scene's eventual omission started as an attempt to once again give the audience its due, and ended up as both a boon to the budget

and an unplanned tribute to one of the director's mentors. "I abandoned it for the very simple reason that when we shot the scene of Jodie there with Dr. Lector, describing verbally her experience, I looked at the footage and thought it would be impossible to intrude on this performance with cutaways to a little girl doing something. Nothing we could film would equal the power of Jodie's telling of the experience. That it saved us several hundred thousand dollars in the bargain was a delightful conceit for me—it's the kind of thing I think Roger Corman would be proud of."

In a more direct tribute, Demme had Corman himself on-set, playing FBI director Hayden Burke in a brief cameo performance. But, if anyone still questioned the director's love of film noir's scruffier genres, another, uncredited walk-on by one of Pittsburgh's more illustrious natives should have been enough to dispel all doubts. Said Demme, "When two guards come in with Dr. Chilton to take Clarice away from Dr. Lector, they're accompanied by a man who's holding a walkie-talkie—he seems to be the head of security or something. That's George Romero. When we arrived in Pittsburgh, I immediately tracked him down, and called him and asked him if he'd honor us with a cameo of some kind. And he came down and did it.

"That was because I really understood that when you come to Pittsburgh to make a horror movie, it's very important to call up and pay homage to the King." □

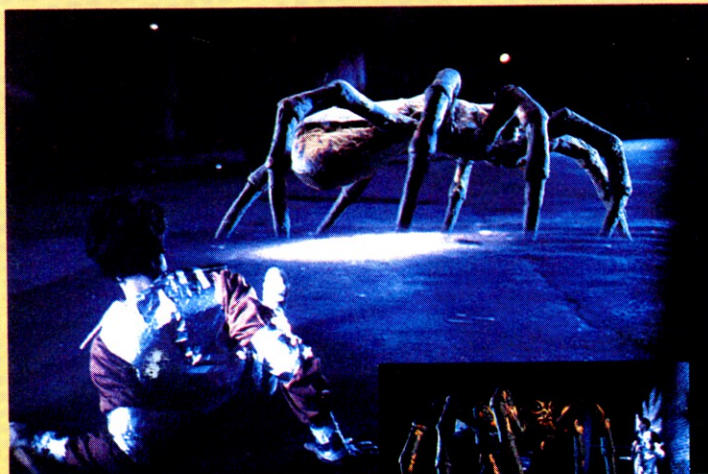
LUNATICS

A quirky video project from Sam Raimi's Detroit-based Renaissance Pictures.

By Sue Uram

LUNATICS is a direct-to-video low-budgeter produced by Renaissance Pictures of Detroit, the company headed by director Sam Raimi, the horror *auteur* of THE EVIL DEAD and DARKMAN. Raimi executive produced the feature with Renaissance partner Robert Tapert, co-executive producer, and Bruce Campbell, who served as producer and plays a minor role. Josh Becker (THOU SHALT NOT KILL... EXCEPT) directed from his own script, termed a quirky love story for the '90s. Locally funded on a budget under \$500,000, the film has been picked up for video release by TriStar/Columbia. "It's not a horror film,"

Ted Raimi, girded with industrial-strength aluminum foil, an agoraphobic poised to battle imagined horrors.



Raimi's brother Ted flees from a giant spider, rear screen stop-motion effects by Dave Hettmer of The Special Effects Center, based in Livonia, Michigan.

insisted Becker. "What it is, is a love story of two crazy people who find each other, proving that there is someone for everyone no matter how crazy and messed up you are." The movie was filmed largely in an abandoned Auburn Hills High School and locations in Pontiac, Michigan, doubling for Los Angeles. Theodore Raimi (EVIL DEAD II, SHOCKER, DARKMAN) plays the lead role of Hank, an agoraphobic who never leaves his home.

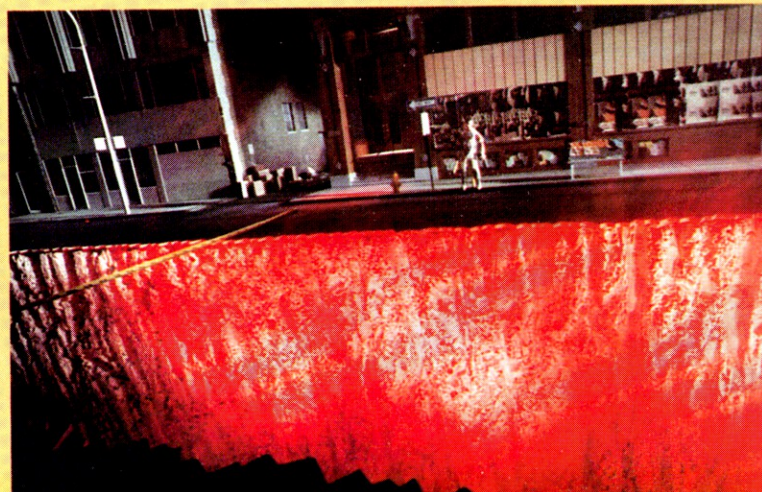
Deborah Foreman (VALLEY GIRL, WAXWORK, DESTROYER, SUNDOWN) plays the female lead, Nancy, a sweet, naive runaway pursued by a street gang. As she takes shelter in a phone booth, she answers a call from Hank and persuades him to allow her to take shelter in his home. Between these two unlikely characters a deep feeling evolves in the claustrophobic environment of Hank's apartment.



Becker described the "look" of LUNATICS as being as surrealistic as a Dali painting. "Because Hank, the main character is insane," said Becker, "we get his point of view of things. This makes it possible to go from live action to anything within the character's mind." Effects for the film's fantasy sequences are the work of Acme Special Effects, headed by Gary Jones and Phantasy Visual Effects, run by Dave Hettmer, Detroit craftsmen who previously collaborated on MOONTRAP. Fantasy sequences, done stop motion, involve Hank's fear of spiders, or arachnophobia, and include his confrontation with a giant insect and a peek inside at the paranoia of his fevered brain.

Becker dismissed parallels to Disney's ARACHNOPHOBIA, 1990's summer horror hit. "We are doing what ARACHNOPHOBIA did not do," said Becker. "We are actually going into the brain to understand the psychological horror behind the fear of spiders." For the six-second sequence, Jones constructed a seven-foot prop

Nancy, who decides not to saddle Hank with her problems, leaves, prompting Hank to face his fear of the outside world for the sake of love rather than remain hopelessly alone forever. Wrapped in industrial strength aluminum foil like some 20th century knight, Hank leaves the house to do battle with internal and external forces which threaten his love.



ARMY OF DARKNESS: EVIL DEAD III

Renaissance Pictures' sequel is now filming in Hollywood.

By Sue Uram

Renaissance Pictures' renaissance man, Bruce Campbell, producer, director, writer, and actor, after finishing producing chores on LUNATICS in Detroit, segued into the role of Ash in director Sam Raimi's ARMY OF DARKNESS: EVIL DEAD III, filming in Hollywood for DeLaurentiis Communications and Universal release—summer 1992. Besides reprising his role as Raimi's much put-upon hero, Campbell is co-producing the film with Robert Tapert.

Campbell noted that DeLaurentiis is funding the project with a budget "... over \$5 million or under \$10 million—depending on who you talk to. If you talk to Universal, they will give you a number, whereas we have a different number. Let's just say the budget is comparable to EVIL DEAD II with the addition of inflation and a little bit more."

Campbell summarized the storyline scripted by Raimi and brother Ivan, as picking up where its predecessor left off. Ash is stranded in 1300 A.D., faced with the legions of the dead. Campbell described it as "one man's struggle to return to his own time period as in Mark Twain's 'Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court.'" However, once the "legions of the dead" are added to the recipe, Campbell added it's more like "Mark Twain—possessed!"

Satisfying Raimi's penchant for wall-to-wall special effects

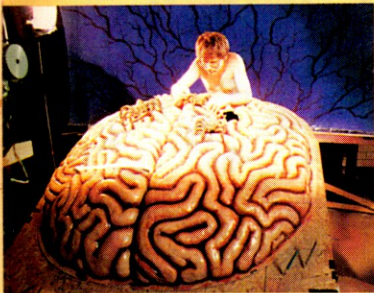


Renaissance Pictures co-producer Bruce Campbell, returning as Ash, the chainsaw-wielding monster-fighter.

are Introvision and makeup artist Tony Gardner, both veterans of Raimi's DARKMAN. The KNB Effects Group gives birth to the "armies of the dead" and the great Evil Dead itself! The use of Introvision's stage-bound front projection system is the most extensive ever attempted.

Campbell said Renaissance is contractually obligated to deliver an R-rated picture, and though the film is more adventure than horror, it will still cater to Raimi's core audience. Next up for Campbell is THE MAN WITH THE SCREAMING BRAIN, which he will write and direct for his own Freedom Films banner. □

The opening of LUNATICS—actually a love story—features spiders, stop-motion animation by Dave Hettmer, feasting on the brain of its arachniphobic protagonist, or so he imagines it. Below Left: Hettmer animating the shot on a large-scale "brain vista" built by Acme Special Effects, based in Mt. Clemens, Michigan.



of Hank's brain, with Hettmer animating the spiders crawling on its surface.

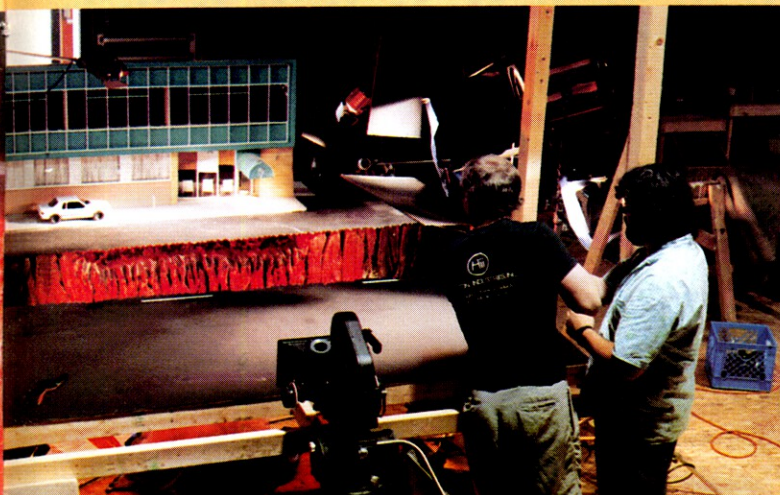
Another major fantasy sequence depicts a fiery crevasse opening up before Hank on the street, as a car plummets inside, bursting into a mushrooming fireball. Becker called on Acme to realize the sequence in miniature, duplicating the buildings of the Pontiac, Michigan street used for filming as

Raimi imagines a chasm, opening up on the street before him. Below: Filming the miniature set-up at Acme Special Effects, cameraman Bruce Shermer (l) and film effects supervisor Gary Jones.

one-twelfth scale models. The effects pyrotechnics provide an edge to Raimi's portrayal of the psychologically troubled recluse.

As director Raimi's younger brother, actor Theodore Raimi admitted he has a tough act to follow. Raimi has played mostly "Mr. Nice Guy" roles and bookish, nerdy type characters. With his role in LUNATICS, Raimi said he was attempting a realistic portrayal even though the theme of the movie is admittedly "wacky." "Look," said Raimi, "Everyone tries to be sane in a crazy world. No one likes to think that they are crazy. In Hank's confrontation with the street gang, he really lucks out because they think he's crazy."

Raimi makes his passion for acting sound almost therapeutic. "I can be anyone I want to be in pretend," said Raimi. "I am able to reconcile my inner self through acting." □



BEAUTY &

The story behind the making of the fairy tale

By Sheldon Teitelbaum

Producer Don (WHO FRAMED ROGER RABBIT?, TUMMY TROUBLE) Hahn calls it "the last of the red hot fairy tales." It is certainly one of the few vestiges of classic folklore yet unmined by Disney. Alas, it was only a matter of time before the Mouse sunk his teeth into it—Disney has pledged to release a new animated feature a year. And so, some four years ago, screenwriter Linda Wolfert turned in her adaptation of the well-known French fable, *Beauty and the Beast*, and the familiar myth-chomping gears began to turn.

The result, which opened nationwide November 22, is Disney's 30th animated feature to date—its fourth in as many years—and a musical treat that ought to appeal equally to children and the adults dutifully charged with schlepping them into their local Cineplex Odeon. More akin to last year's *THE LITTLE MERMAID* than the 1946 Jean Cocteau film, *LA*



The happy couple in Disney's latest cartoon feature, based on the oft-filmed French fable.

BELLE ET LA BETE, Disney's version is nevertheless very much a beast of its own.

The new movie, directed by Disney story department veterans Gary Trousdale and Kirk Wise, stands apart from its predecessor in several areas. Key among them is that Disney's *BEAUTY AND THE BEAST*, with the help of Oscar-winning song writers Howard Ashman and Alan Menken, strives for a more expansive integration of music than they

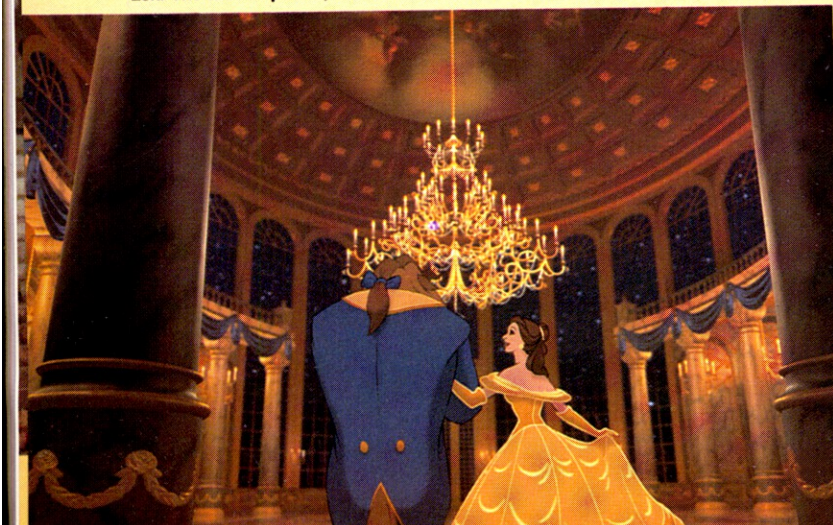
accomplished in their Oscar-winning *THE LITTLE MERMAID*. Whereas the music in *MERMAID* strived for a pop lilt, the songs in *BEAUTY AND THE BEAST* have a more sweeping narrative quality to them, suggestive of operetta or the French music hall tradition.

Among the sure-fire hits in store, an hilarious barroom waltz with a brawling quality sung by Le Fou (the Idiot) and his fellow French rednecks in

tribute to their hero, the extravagantly self-infatuated, hirsute and wildly hormonal villain Gaston; a rousing French music hall number delivered by a Maurice Chevalier-like candle with the voice of Jerry Orbach; a teapot voiced-over by Angela Lansbury (shades of Sweeney Todd); a mantle clock with the voice of David Ogden Stiers; and a dining room full of dishes and cooking utensils; and the climactic "Mob Song," the kind of thing one might have expected had *YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN* been a musical.

Another difference is that the protagonist, Belle, is more assertive than previous Disney heroes, including *THE LITTLE MERMAID*'s Ariel. With the dulcet voice of Paige O'Hara, she is a bright, practical and loving young woman who falls under the spell—however reluctantly at first—of the beast, a tormented and lonely soul trapped in the body of a monster. To achieve salvation, the beast must learn to love, something he was incapable

Left: The Beast's palace, the rich detailed look of Disney's Golden Age. Right: The Beast's enchanted housewares, characters added to burst into song and flesh-out the tale.



THE BEAST

classic, Disney's thirtieth animated feature.

ble of doing as a prince.

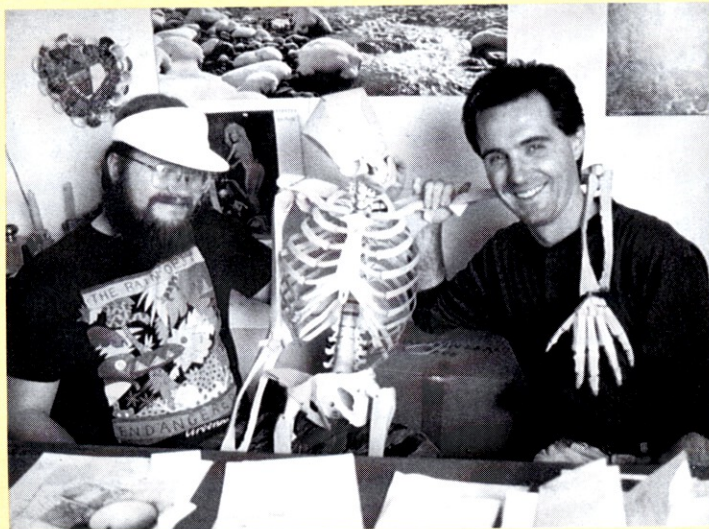
"It is definitely our own version," said Hahn, who signed onto the project in 1988, after serving as associate producer on *WHO FRAMED ROGER RABBIT?* "It resembles very little of the other versions you've ever seen. The story exists in many cultures—there's the 'Frog Prince,' for instance, and *Phantom of the Opera*. Each generation tells its own version."

For Disney, however, the question of who would tell this version proved critical. Originally, *BEAUTY AND THE BEAST* was assigned, in late 1989, to British animators Richard Purdom and his wife. Purdom, a protege of Canadian animator Richard Williams, has an animation company in London. But according to Hahn, the Purdoms were not keen on doing a musical, and, in fact, anticipated a far darker film than suited Disney's sunny imprimatur.

"His version was lovely," said Hahn, "but out of the fanciful musical fantasy mode we were looking for at that time. He was going in another direction—he wanted to make a classic fairy tale, as we did. But he had a perspective on it that wasn't ringing true to our direction. But the more we decided to musicalize it, the less interested he became in the project. We ultimately decided it was better to go our separate ways.

"*THE LITTLE MERMAID* had just come out," recalled Hahn, "and we approached Alan [Menken] and Howard [Ashman], reworking the outline with a musical in mind. In early '90 we spent a lot of time in Fishkill, New York, at the Residents Inn, working on the songs. The script came first—we didn't decide on a lot of song moments until the script had been completed. Then Howard would say, 'Oh look, here is

"It's as though you actually built a set and flew the camera around to create a moving environment," said producer Don Hahn. "We did this with computer graphics."



Directors Gary Trousdale and Kirk Wise, getting in the horror mood of the tale.

a chunk of movie where Gaston blackmails Belle, throws her and her father in the basement, and they go to lynch the beast—we could make it a mob song.' Or, 'Here's where Belle sings about what she wants in life—she dreams about adventure.'

"He would take these emotional turning points in the story and turn them into song moments. Gaston's is one of the earliest. We always knew this villain could have this terrific song with his cronies about how great he is."

Hahn also signed on Kirk Wise and Gary Trousdale as directors. Though new to directing features, the duo had directed "Cranium Command" for Disney's Epcot Center. Both were veterans of Disney's story department, and had

worked as storyboard artists and in other capacities on the first *ROGER RABBIT* cartoon, on *THE LITTLE MERMAID* and *THE GREAT MOUSE DETECTIVE*.

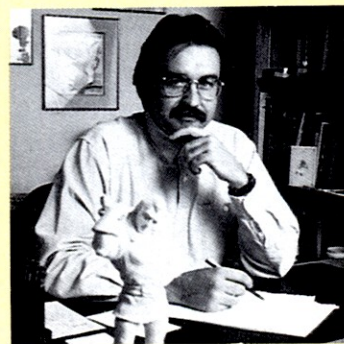
"It was an opportunity to get some fresh blood and directing talent and a new spin on the story," said Hahn. "The day after we found out the Purdoms were going to leave we got them on a plane and said there might be an opportunity to direct.

"We tried to tell the story from the perspective of the beast. He's the guy trapped in a monkey suit; he's the guy with a problem, who spends the whole movie trying to redeem himself. The moral, of course, is that beauty is only skin deep—don't judge a book from its cover."

Animation for *BEAUTY AND THE BEAST* took a little over a year to complete, with some 500 artists, musicians and others working on the project in all. Hahn noted that his staff tried out some new animation methods in the process, including the use of moving backgrounds. "It's as though you actually built a set and flew the camera around to create a moving environment. We did this with computer graphics techniques, building a set digitally and flying a camera around. We also used extensive tone mattes—the renderings you saw in *ROGER RABBIT*. Instead of a flat, pasted-on cartoon, they all have a dark side and a light side. Those are tone mattes that create dimensional characters."

Hahn said that in making *BEAUTY AND THE BEAST*, he was not out to replicate the tone or tenor of *THE LITTLE MERMAID*. "Making it into a musical was related to the success of *MERMAID*," he acknowledged. "That was a turning point, perhaps. But we tried to develop something that wasn't just a *MERMAID* wannabe; something that could stand on its own. The last thing I wanted to do as a producer was make a clone of *MERMAID*. Creatively, it was important for us, as artists, to be able to stretch and do something a little different." □

Disney producer Don Hahn.



WILLIAM SHATNER

Kirk's alter ego contemplates the idea of directing again.

By Mark Altman

William Shatner, despite a few reservations, said he was content to simply sit in the captain's chair in *STAR TREK VI*, guiding the Enterprise in front of the camera and not behind it. "On one hand, guiding was a tremendous relief," laughed Shatner about not directing the latest installment. "I was only too aware of the pressures on [director] Nick Meyer both from a production point of view and a political point of view from the studio." For the actor-turned-director who faced his fair share of budget and scripting problems on his directorial debut on *STAR TREK V: THE FINAL FRONTIER*, the problems which typified the shooting of *STAR TREK VI: THE UNDISCOVERED COUNTRY*, including a tight shooting schedule and last minute slashing of the budget by the studio, caused him *deja vu*.

Paramount had intended *STAR TREK VI*, which opened December 13, as the swan song for the show's classic cast, including Shatner. But the studio had second thoughts late in the production process, after reviewing the high quality of the assembled footage. "The script was definitely written as a finale," revealed Shatner.



Shatner as Kirk in the 1966 pilot for *STAR TREK*.

"When I was looping the film, I realized the movie had such an energy and vitality that this was not a dying show. I spoke to several people about the possibility of changing, ever so slightly, some of the ending and got a very positive response."

Dropped were a final credits sequence in which the names of the classic characters appear, writ large among the stars, as well as a log entry scripted for Kirk in which he passed the baton to the cast of television rival, *THE NEXT GENERATION*. Shatner termed that goodbye "one too many." As

for the more open ending now on the film, Shatner suggested the movie series' fate now rests with the public. "If the boxoffice goes somewhere between \$80-and-\$100 million, the studio is going to think very seriously about *STAR TREK VII*," said Shatner. "If it doesn't, there will be no more *STAR TREKs*."

Few actors can claim, as can Shatner with the role of Captain Kirk, to have indelibly etched a character of near mythological importance onto the American pop consciousness. "Having done a quick course with Joseph Campbell, I've realized that the magic of *STAR TREK* is to provide a mythology that this culture doesn't

have," Shatner said. "As he [Campbell] pointed out, mythology relates man to his environment and tries to explain some of the inexplicable dilemmas and the dichotomies that face us. Because of the construction of our culture, we don't have time for that because all of us are busy solving these problems with science. I think mythology is best served by an individual, along with his hearty band of brothers, as was done so many times, so well, by the Greeks."

It is for this reason, Shatner maintained, that *STAR TREK*, with its near-mythological tri-



Shatner and Christopher Plummer as General Chang in *STAR TREK VI*.

umvirate of archetypes, became a "classic," and the reason Shatner believes its successor, *THE NEXT GENERATION*, is less satisfying. "My perception is that it's more interesting storytelling to have passion and have one person in a dilemma," he said. "It's a more personally effective way of telling a story. A story told by committee is not as exciting. There's more distance between you and the audience. But from what I can see, [*THE NEXT GENERATION*]'s very popular, has achieved an audience, and that's good. I hope it's good for the movies."

Despite his lack of praise for the competition, Shatner claimed to be a fan of Patrick Stewart, his opposite number aboard *THE NEXT GENERATION*'s Enterprise 1701-D. Earlier this year the actors appeared together on stage at a *STAR TREK* convention in New York City, dubbed "The Two Captains' Con." Noted Shatner, "To me Patrick Stewart is not the captain. He's just a wonderful actor. It was a pleasure to be in his company. He seemed, in person, a little straight, matter-of-fact, but

LAST-MINUTE REPRIEVE

“The script was definitely written as a finale,” said Shatner. “I realized it had such an energy and vitality that this was not a dying show, and I spoke to people about changing the ending.”



For his role in the latest Trek saga, Shatner, 60, had his toupee frosted with gray. Older and wiser, the actor said he had his sights on directing STAR TREK VII.

certainly very admirable before we got on stage. However, when we got on stage he was wild, funny, with a quip for everything, and very quick on his feet. I enjoyed him very much, and had a wonderful time.”

Not so wonderful was Shatner’s discovery at another convention that Leonard Nimoy, who had often joined Shatner and other TREK veterans in disparaging THE NEXT GENERATION, had in fact agreed to make a guest appearance as Spock on the upstart series. Shatner admitted he was “flabbergasted” by the news, which hadn’t come from Nimoy. “I talked to him later,” said Shatner. “He said it sounded like a good idea.” Shatner didn’t know whether he’d join his colleague in paying a visit to the 24th Century, either in front of or behind the camera. Deferring to Sean Connery, Shatner quipped, “Never say ‘never!’”

After living with STAR TREK for 25 years, Shatner has developed strong opinions about the TV and movie series. For instance, it is Shatner’s belief that, for dramatic reso-

nance Spock would have been better left dead at the end of STAR TREK II. Despite reviving the Vulcan, Shatner credited producer Harve Bennett, deposed by Paramount for insisting on making STAR TREK VI a prequel with a younger cast, for much of the success of the movie series.

“When the movies began, STAR TREK [THE MOTION PICTURE] was not successful,” recalled Shatner. “It was only because of Paramount’s belief that there must be some boxoffice somewhere, that they hired Bennett. He set the tone of the subsequent movies.

Shatner, directing Todd Bryant as Captain Klaa in STAR TREK V, a misstep on the final frontier Shatner chalked up to inexperience and Paramount budget cuts.



Gene [Roddenbery] was in the background, offering advice, but not involved in the creative process. In STAR TREK VI, we’ve taken the legacy that Harve left us and very successfully continued. Of course, the rest of us have had our input. If we didn’t know something about STAR TREK by now we ought to be put away.”

Shatner’s desire to have input on STAR TREK VI sometimes put him at odds with writer/director Nicholas Meyer, a key figure in the success of STAR TREKs II and IV. In one infamous incident, Shatner threw a script at Meyer in a disagreement which prompted the director to jokingly throw a script back at Shatner several days later.

“I was sensitized to the things he needed to accomplish,” Shatner said of Meyer. “As time would get short, the anxiety that was involved in trying to get it done on time grew. I felt a sense of loss that I couldn’t be the problem solver, but at the same time I was very relieved. I could go to my dressing room and do whatever I did between shots. At the same time, I would have loved to have been immersed in those very same problems and bring to bear what I had learned [as director] on the previous film. It was kind of a double feeling

of relief and desire to have been part of a larger work.”

Though Shatner garnered mixed notices for his directing debut on STAR TREK V, the actor has met with more success as a bestselling science-fiction author. The publication of a trilogy of books written with Ron Goulart suggests that Shatner’s stint in space could be far from over. “I wrote a book called *TekWar* which spawned *TekLords*, and *TekLad* comes out [in December],” noted Shatner. “I’ve also written ‘Believe’ in collaboration with Michael Tobias, and we’ve just written a play. Out of STAR TREK V a whole sort of cottage industry has sprung up.”

As for Shatner’s future directorial plans, he could only speculate. “I had the most joyful time of my life directing STAR TREK V and whether it’s STAR TREK VII or another film or one of the several books I have out now that lend themselves to filmic adaptation, I’ll be back behind the camera. Directing film is a wild adventure for anyone equipped to do it.

“As for STAR TREK,” continued Shatner, “I’d like to be connected in any way I can. It’s been a wonderful storytelling form and I enjoy the people very, very much. Anything I could do, I’d be willing to do.”

As for Captain Kirk’s long overdue romantic entanglement in STAR TREK VI, which turns out not to be everything Kirk expected, Shatner could only laugh. “I am torn between feeling 21 and wondering what I look like,” he said. “I don’t think I’m the authority on whether I should still be involved with romance, but I did add a telling line there where De [DeForest Kelley as McCoy] says, ‘What is it with you Jim?’ My reply was, ‘I can’t help it.’” □

GUYVER

Japan's comic book and merchandising hero is poised to strike the U.S. market.

By Dan Cziraky

GUYVER is a \$3 million feature film version of the six volume Japanese graphic novel by Yoshika Takaya, which served as the directing debut of makeup effects artists Screaming Mad George and Steve Wang. STUDENT BODIES heartthrob Jack Armstrong plays a college student thrust into superherodom *a la* THE ROCKETEER when he finds "the Guyver," an alien device that transforms him into an invincibly armored fighting machine. Mark Hamill (STAR WARS) is featured as a CIA agent out to keep the device from falling into the wrong hands. Produced by Brian Yuzna (RE-ANIMATOR), the film opened in Japan last September, with U.S. theatrical and video rights still up for sale.

George, the Japanese makeup artist best known for the female body-builder-turned-cockroach effect of A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET 4, was originally sought by the Japanese rights owners, Bandai Toy Company and Hero Communications, to do the film's makeup

Co-director/effects designer Screaming Mad George, on set with the GUYVER, a college student thrust into superherodom when he finds an alien device.



Zoanoids (l to r) Spice Williams, Michael Berryman, Jimmy Walker and Peter Speller, kidnap the GUYVER's girlfriend, THE LAST EMPEROR's Vivian Wu.

effects. "One of my conditions was that I would direct," said George, who brought in Yuzna, with whom he had worked on BRIDE OF RE-ANIMATOR, as producer, and Wang, an effects colleague, as co-director.

The Japanese comic book series, already the inspiration for toys and an animated version in Japan, was translated into English by George, who roughed out the film's outline—scripted by John Purdy—with Yuzna and Wang. "The animated version of GUYVER is a lot more serious and meant for adults," said George. "It had a lot of gory violence and adult themes. As we got into script development, we realized that with the budget and schedule we had to shoot the movie, we'd probably be better off making it for a broader audience, like a PG-13."

First-time directors George and Wang completed the movie's principal photography in five weeks, beginning in October 1990, shooting on locations in Simi Valley and Los Angeles. At first directing side by side, the co-directors soon split up into separate units with Wang, a Taiwan native heavily influenced by ULTRAMAN, handling the bulk of the film's action scenes.

Wang and George had met while working in the makeup department of Boss

Films, and Wang, a self-taught makeup artist, was later hired by Stan Winston to work on PREDATOR. "It was the first film to really feature my painting style," said Wang, "with all the spots and patterns." The creature effects for GUYVER, supervised by Wang and George include the Zoanoids, alien-induced human mutations genetically designed as organic weapons, capable of transforming into monstrous soldiers. The film's climax pits the GUYVER against a huge, eight-legged Zoanoid mutation, filmed both live and with puppetry as a one-fifth scale miniature.

David Gale, the evil scientist of Yuzna's RE-ANIMATOR series, plays the film's Zoanoid leader, out to retrieve the Guyver. Featured as Armstrong's love interest is Vivian Wu, seen as the second wife of Bernardo Bertolucci's THE LAST EMPEROR. Genre luminaries featured in the cast include Michael Berryman (THE HILLS HAVE EYES) and Spice Williams (STAR TREK V) as Zoanoid henchmen, Jeffrey Coombs as Dr. East, with a cameo by scream queen Linnea Quigley. And in an off-beat casting touch suggested by Wang, GOOD-TIMES star Jimmy "J.J." Walker plays a Zoanoid rapper whose anthem is "Dy-no-mite!" Wang thought of Walker because one of the Zoanoid monsters designed for the film by Jim Kagel reminded him of the lanky, black actor. "We were just joking around about who could play these monsters," said Wang. "We laughed about it, then thought, 'Why not?'"

George, who plans to direct his own script called ANIMUS, likens GUYVER to "ROBOCOP versus PREDATOR by way of TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES. This isn't stupid comedy but real, legitimate, funny moments that don't get in the way of being played as a straight action-adventure." □



EFFECTS HERO

A jaw-dropping transformation by Ted Rae.

By Chip Merriwether

To insure the believability of actor Jack Armstrong's metamorphosis from young teen to the space armored GUYVER, visual effects man Ted Rae was called upon by co-director Steve Wang to devise a startling display of matched-move stop-motion control work which emulated the gestalt of Japanese animation films long admired by both men. The shot has drawn applause at preview screenings.

With the assistance of Asao Goto, Rae's first order of business was the crafting of a detailed one-third scale puppet of the actor and a miniature set

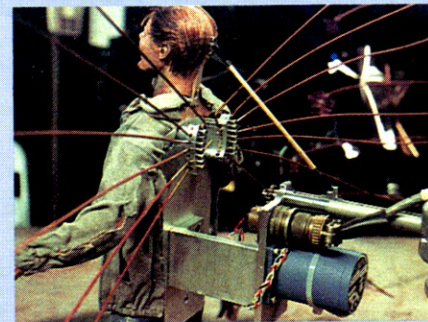
to match the live action. Unlike most stop-motion puppets, the armature was designed specifically to *not* move from the chest down since it needed to be sturdy enough to hold fourteen four-to-five-foot tentacles. The rigid body was fashioned in Sculpey by Wyatt Weed and topped with a rigid grimacing visage of Armstrong. A tiny foam rubber neck appliance allowed the two rigid sections of the body to move naturally in relation to each other. Costumer Lynette Johnson supplied the 22-inch puppet's pint-sized wardrobe, including scaled down bluejeans and sweatshirt, which along with the stylized T-shirt artwork of

the rock band "The Cult," were meticulously hand-painted and airbrushed to camera by Goto.

For their miniature set, Rae and Goto sculpted one-third scale barrels and vacuformed scale versions of the corrugated sheet metal backdrop complete with airbrushed rust, graffiti, and trash glued rigidly to the set floor. To anchor the set for animation it was firmly attached to a four by twelve foot platform which was bolted and chained to the floor along with the motion control camera track to insure solidity. "You could walk up and literally kick the set as hard as you wanted and it wouldn't budge,"



College student Jack Armstrong (left) undergoes his transformation into the GUYVER (above), an alien-armored, ultimate fighting machine. Armstrong is actually a detailed puppet on a one third-scale miniature set. Below: The puppet's tentacle support and motion-control rigging attached to the head.



recalled Rae. "That was essential because we crawled on, off, and all over the set animating the tentacles." Though the moving camera stop-motion control element of the shot accounts for only 25% of the eight-second transformation scene, it required eight arduous weeks of preparation.

The shot begins with a close-up of the real Armstrong and then rapidly pulls back to reveal the puppet Armstrong transforming into the GUYVER. Rae noted that the shot's biggest challenge was matching the camera moves to blend the two set-ups, a process of countless hours. "It was difficult because the perspective had to match in three dimensions since the camera was moving," said Rae. The live

continued on page 60

Left: Filming the live-action shot of Armstrong, duplicated in miniature, that sets up the puppet transformation shot. Right: Steve Wang (l), the film's co-director, and visual effects supervisor Ted Rae, setting up the configuration of armor-bearing tentacles.



The Addams Family

The effects trials and travails, liberating "Thing" on screen.

By Sheldon Teitelbaum

A few years ago, Allan Munro spent an evening with some of his special effects cronies popping tapes on the VCR and shooting the breeze. One of the films they saw was *THREE O'CLOCK HIGH*, directed in 1987 by Steven Spielberg protege Phil Joanou, of whom critic Leonard Maltin once declared was "to the camera what James Brown is to shoes."

Actually, responsibility for *THREE O'CLOCK HIGH*'s frenetic pace belonged to director of photography Barry Sonnenfeld, whose fast and low camera work lifted *RAISING ARIZONA* to commendable comedic heights. Munro and his friends knew this. For special effects mavens, who value a steady hand and a tight shot, DPs like Sonnenfeld, who wield their cameras like a short-stocked M-16, are nightmares. Appropriately, Munro and his associates rolled their eyes in horror at the prospect of ever working for such a person.

"Who would have imagined," said Munro four years later, "that I would end up doing special effects for a production—and he's the *director*."

Munro was offered the job of special effects supervisor on *THE ADDAMS FAMILY* by



Producer Scott Rudin (l), director Barry Sonnenfeld, and Anjelica Huston as Morticia, on the set of the Orion-turned-Paramount project.

producer Scott Rudin, who got the recommendation from Tim Burton, with whom Munro had worked on *BETLEJUICE*. Rudin had met Munro at Fox, when Rudin was head of production on *PREDATOR*, on which Munro had worked on effects. Munro had also worked with *THE ADDAMS FAMILY* line producer Jack Evans on *RUNAWAY TRAIN*.

THE ADDAMS FAMILY would, it was anticipated, feature a range of high-end effects work, including matte work, blue screen techniques, split screen and composites as well as insert photography, unusual camera propulsion and elaborate makeup and prosthetics. For Munro, however, the job boiled down to one critical ele-

ment—getting the disembodied hand called "Thing" to work properly. Accomplishing this observed effects coordinator Chuck Gaspar, production designer Richard MacDonald and others, was touch and go from the start.

Munro said his ordeal began with a creeping obsession: "I became fixated with people's hands; what they would do with them; how they would gesture; how they moved and why they moved when they moved. Anytime, anywhere—in elevators, in restaurants, in front of my own mirror—I became obsessed with people's

hands and what they were doing with them. And I'd ask, how can I take this and translate it into something usable?"

The issue was more than one of mere anatomy that might have been addressed by perusing Leonardo Da Vinci's anatomy sketches. Rather, Munro had to create in *Thing* not a mere appendage, but a fully-realized creature capable of a range of expression whose net effect would be to suggest an autonomous, sentient presence. Munro realized early on, however, that though widely used to punctuate speech and facial expression, hand gestures aren't terribly communicative in and of themselves.

"As strange as it sounds," explained Munro, "there is a

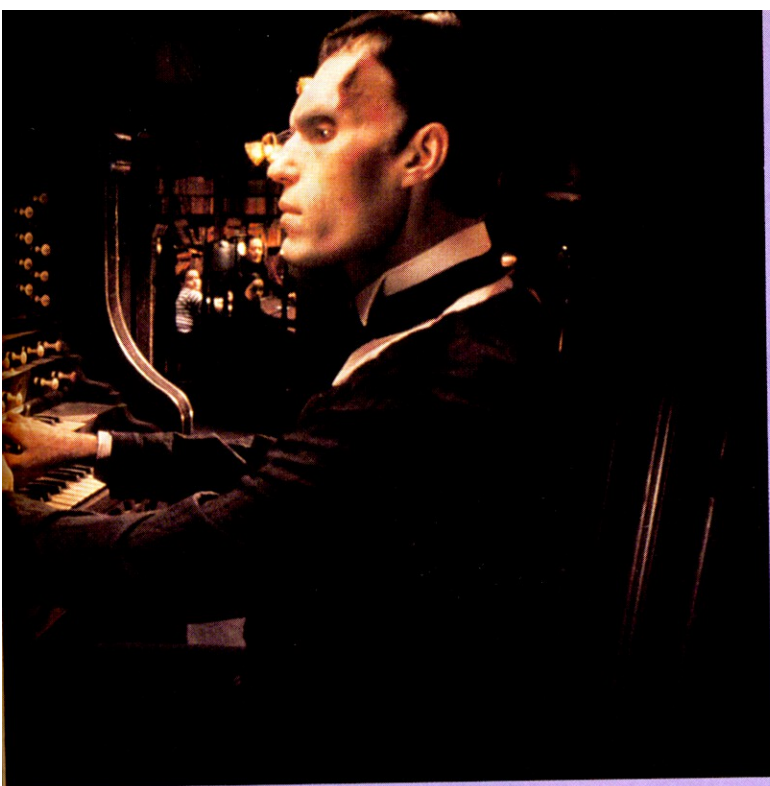


Carel Struycken as Lurch, the Addams' family retainer, providing mood music.

sort of interesting correlation—and at the same time a lack of correlation—between the gestures that people make with their hands and their emotional expression. When someone is happy and they gesture with their hands, it doesn't necessarily translate, when you separate that gesture from the rest of the body, as happiness.

"My problem was always finding what hand gestures could be worked out so that when they were completely separate, they would express some sort of emotion." Thus, *Thing* became, in concept if not actualization, a self-propelled creature, a family pet not entirely different in motivation—though certainly so in terms of style—from *Lassie*. "We were looking," said Munro, "for a full range of emotion—a curious mixture of the very human and completely non-human."

Other fine cameramen, before Sonnenfeld, have failed to make their mark in Hollywood by turning director, including Gordon Willis, John Alonzo and William Fraker. "You can see why writers and editors would make better directors," noted Sonnenfeld with astonishing frankness. "They think in terms of structure and story-telling. We think in terms of 'if they stand over there they'll look better.'"



Cinematographer-turned-director Sonnenfeld's penchant for compositions like this, with the family glimpsed on another set in the background, took forever to light.

Rudin, who hired Sonnenfeld, it has been speculated, so that he could in effect direct the film himself, said that one of his main contributions to their collaboration was keeping close tabs on Sonnenfeld's work with actors. "I was very careful about watching the acting," said Rudin. "I felt that was where Barry would need the most prodding. I trusted his taste implicitly. It's a big show, and it's very easy to lose sight of things."

"There were a lot of complicated elements in this picture," noted cinematographer Gale Tattersal. "When shooting a close-up in one room, the way the set was designed you would see through four other rooms, which meant lighting another three or four rooms over a distance of 120 feet."

In *THE ADDAMS FAMILY*, Thing is portrayed by a series of mechanical devices—mostly remote-controlled puppets and a stop-motion hand designed and shot by mechanical effects artist Doug Beswick—and by the human hand (sometimes adorned by prosthetic appliances) of magician Christopher Hart, severed from the rest of his body by deft rotoscoping. According to Munro, Hart's hand occupies center stage for approximately 75% of Thing's appearance in the film.

Apart from purely technical considerations suggested by the nature of the particular shot, the rule of thumb Munro arrived at for when to use which, was relatively simple. Repetitive motions—Thing giving Gomez a head massage or pulling a small, black, velvet-lined Radio Flyer wagon loaded with his rings, gloves and other worldly possessions after being evicted from the Addams mansion—were entrusted to the puppets. Gestures requiring any degree of subtlety, however, were left to Hart.

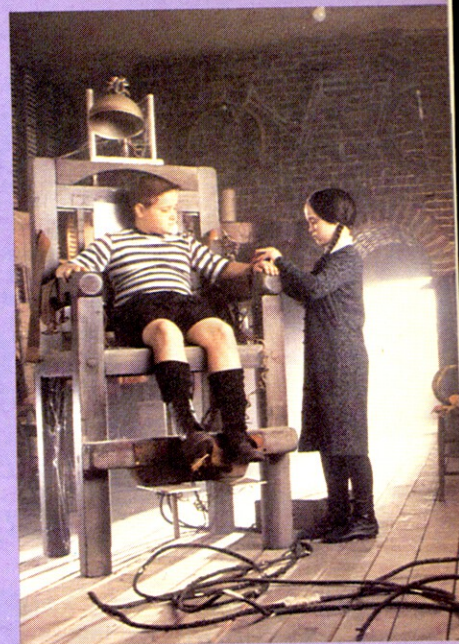
Getting a mechanical hand to pull a wagon, said Munro, was no mean feat. Still, it was easier to pull off than some of the other sleight-of-hand effects his puppets were charged with. The puppet hands are stuffed

with servo-motors. The proximity of a wagon, table, or any other prop meant more room in which to hide the requisite cogs and gears. The wagon, in fact, was self-propelled, whereas the hand puppet merely wagged its fingers while suspended up front. The difficulty in making the shot believable was getting the fingers to do the walking without actually touching the ground. They stopped short, said Munro, a hundredth of an inch from the surface.

Gaspar recalled the difficulties, however, getting the fingers to bend backward—there simply wasn't enough power in the servos. His own people, he said, were called in on at least one occasion to strip down one of the mechanical devices and get them working. He said that even after that, he wasn't impressed by the result. "The mechanical hand was a failure," stated Gaspar.

Munro disagreed, noting that the actual mechanics of Thing needn't be dazzling for audiences to be wowed. "You see so many shots that are technically so complicated and difficult and flawlessly executed, and yet the audience looks with a blank stare because they don't know how tough it was, and are not overwhelmed. And yet they may love some tacky effect that has charm and personality. I sort of hope people come to love Thing, 'cause I have. He's won me over a little bit. He comes off as pretty damned charming."

Gaspar worked on a number of other mechanical effects, notably the Addams mansion front gate, another ostensibly inanimate object that thinks it is a person. The gate, said Gas-



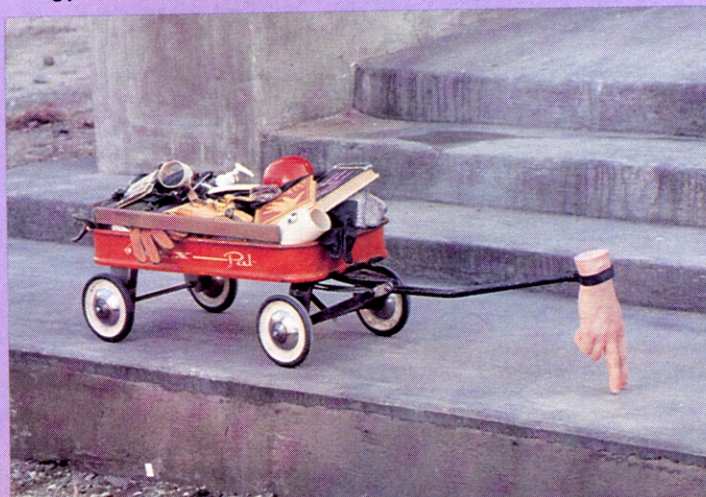
Wednesday (Christina Ricci) and Pugsley (Jimmy Workman) play electric chair, wit courtesy of Charles Addams.

par, is highly protective of the Addams family, hindering what it perceives to be unwarranted intrusions by trespassers, often to comedic effect. In one scene shot for the film, Anjelica Huston, as Morticia, ventures into the blustery night to calm the gate's overzealous proclivities. Created by production designer Richard MacDonald, the menacing-looking gate was expected to open and close via an hydraulic system designed by Gaspar and crew.

Unfortunately, according to MacDonald, they never delivered. "I'll tell you the farce of it," said MacDonald on his last day of work on the film. "The Gate was a character, and there really isn't an estate in the world with more openings. It cost an immense amount of money to design. Gates open and shut all over this place. And we had the special effects people telling us it was going to be terrific—that it's going to do this and that so it will be a real character . . . all the machinery and clutches and hydraulics. But the bloody thing just didn't work."

Yet another effect Gaspar was called on to conjure up was a "hurricane book" in the family library. When Fester fails to heed warnings not to remove the volume from the shelves, it erupts into a small torrent. According to Gaspar, the

Thing packs up and leaves home—one of the few mechanical effects that worked.



The Addams Family

CREATING THE CARTOON'S LOOK

It was all in the family for costumer Ruth Myers and designer Richard MacDonald.

By Sheldon Teitelbaum

Working on THE ADDAMS FAMILY afforded costume designer Ruth Myers, whose films include BLAZE and ALTERED STATES, a rare opportunity to indulge her fancies unfettered by mere historical detail. And working alongside her husband, production designer, Richard MacDonald, she believed, assured her of the kind of close working relationship she said is fundamental to proper design on any picture.

"We work well together," said Myers of her husband, "though we don't work together often. The positions are interinvolved, though it can be difficult, especially these days, when things are prepared in such a great rush at the last minute.

"If they design the sets the same time you are designing the costumes, you don't get a feel for the sets before you've committed, which is a shame. In the old days, they used to start building the sets long before actual shooting, so one used to be able to work it accordingly. If you've got a pink and white set, you don't particularly want a character wearing a pink and white dress. If you've got a house, and the production designer visualizes it as a Victorian house whereas you envisage your characters as being modern, you're going to run into problems."

Aside from what Myers characterized as "teething pangs" during the early days of production, Myers said she did not suffer inordinately from



The design family: MacDonald and costume designer-spouse, Myers.

the indecision that often afflicted the set of THE ADDAMS FAMILY. "I really loved this film," she said. "It was a mixture of the best of theater and of film."

Sticking rather closely to Charles Addams' cartoon costume scheme, Myers didn't bother looking at the TV series for inspiration. "When we were filming, they sent me a tape of the old series," she recalled. "By then I had looked through all the cartoons, had read the script and had started to work. I thought the TV show wasn't as polished as we were going to make it, or felt it should be. I was quite relieved."

Myers' costumes are rich, stylized, and deeply textural. Like the Addams mansion, they suggest old money—not glittery or glitzy, but exotic. "I did not play this like a period picture," she said. "I tried to make Gomez's clothes look like they'd been in the family for centuries. There was a mixture—nothing was newer than '40s. I wanted Gomez, for instance, to have a



Anjelica Huston as Morticia, Raul Julia as Gomez, and Christopher Lloyd as Fester, costumed by Myers to look like they were wearing heirlooms.

swashbuckling, Douglas Fairbanks look. I designed a lot of smoking jackets for him. The idea was that the clothes, like the house had been in the family forever. They were all heirlooms, never frayed, very exquisite. We tarnished all the gold and painted the velvets to a musty color so they looked like antiques."

For Morticia, played by Anjelica Huston, Myers created five different dresses, each one a variation of the other. Myers recounted that Huston was heavily corseted throughout, as it was her intention to give Morticia a wraithlike appearance. "I wanted her to have an absolutely unnatural shape," said Myers. "I didn't want you to feel there was body underneath the clothing. It was important that everything underneath appear solid."

Unfortunately, Huston found herself unable to move under her own steam in these costumes—she had to be wheeled on and off the set. She was also hard put to breathe, which may have accounted for some of her short temper on the set. "She was an awfully good sport about it, mostly," said Myers.

For his part, Myers' husband, the production designer of such films as ALTERED STATES and JESUS CHRIST, SUPERSTAR, had his hands full designing everything from a facade of the Addams house to a mural depicting the death throes of the Addams family's ancestors. With Myers, design work was all in the family. □

MacDonald's antic look for THE ADDAMS FAMILY graveyard, overlooking L.A.



“I’ll tell you the farce of it. We had the special effects people telling us it would be terrific. But the bloody thing wouldn’t work!”

— Designer Richard MacDonald —

effect was overblown in its initial conception and shrunk in magnitude as time passed. Indeed, it was delayed when the filmmakers realized a deluge of water would wreck the stage floors and a number of expensive props if shot as planned. The hurricane was moved into another location with concrete floors last May. Ultimately, said Gaspar, the storm became a misty sprinkle punctuated by blue screen overlays of people and props being blown away.

Gaspar’s final contrivance was a torture table for Morticia. The set was closed during Huston’s days on the rack, allegedly because the actress, fresh from her latest Oscar, felt uncomfortable with the scene. Indeed, Gaspar said that Hus-

ton was in an “ugly” mood while being fitted for her recline on the device, and refused to work with some of his crew. Gaspar said he calmed her by explaining that not fitting her would result in an even more uncomfortable experience for her. There was no storming off the set, said Gaspar.

Chuck Comisky, visual effects production manager/co-supervisor on THE ADDAMS FAMILY, recalled working on some relatively ambitious matte shots establishing an underground river that leads to a treasure vault. Christopher Lloyd and Raul Julia were shot in a gondola on a river in a huge cavern that, of course, doesn’t exist. Other matte shots tied the Addams mansion—an enormous facade built atop a hill in



Filming production designer Richard MacDonald’s mansion facade on a hill overlooking Burbank. Inset: A design sketch by MacDonald of the exterior.

Burbank—to the family cemetery. The turret from which they do so, however, was built 100 feet or so away from the facade, providing easy access and preventing vertigo in the actors. Fester and Gomez mount the turret and shoot golf balls over the cemetery.

Gaspar and Munro concurred that working with Sonnenfeld proved more enjoyable than either had anticipated. Though relentless in his on-set kibbitzing, Sonnenfeld also

knew when to pull it in. “He was gameful,” said Gaspar, “but once you get into production for your first time out, you’ve got to get serious about your business. You can’t screw around. Barry was business all the way.”

“It all worked out better than I could have expected,” added Munro. “He’s been extraordinarily accommodating and understanding of the problems we were faced with.” □

“BEST PERFORMANCE” BY A HAND

Magician Christopher Hart delivers a performance film critics may ultimately characterize as dead from the wrist up. In THE ADDAMS FAMILY Hart appears as the disembodied hand known affectionately as “Thing.” “For this,” said Hart, a Victoria, B.C.-born performer who has worked with David Copperfield and performs regularly in Las Vegas, Atlantic City and L.A.’s Magic Castle, “I had to join SAG.”

Hart is not complaining. Thing is a plum part, requiring more than mere manual dexterity or the ability to work well with remote controlled hand-puppets. At his audition, Hart was called upon to create the kind of presence with his hand some actors are hard pressed to establish with their entire bodies. “They wanted to see a

full range of emotions,” recalled Hart, “including happiness, sadness, mischievousness and urgency. It was an acting role. I was asked to give Thing personality.”

Hart described the kind of Thing he tried to get across as “a mischievous character, very likable. Being disembodied he runs through the house and hallways, plays chess with Gomez, gets involved in practical jokes, sort of like an irrepressible little kid or a pet with many human qualities. He kind of saves the day to get help to save Morticia. I like the fact that he is the hero.”

The makers of THE ADDAMS FAMILY looked far and wide for an appropriate Thing, at first auditioning pantomime artists and puppeteers as

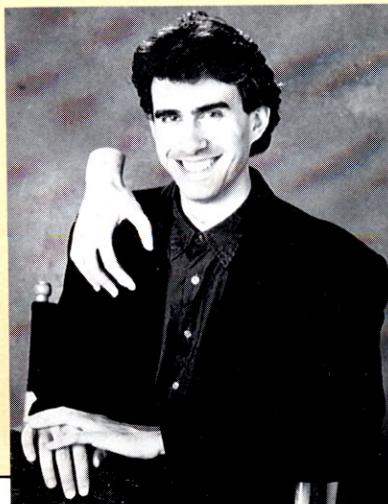
well as magicians. “They wanted a very specific hand type,” said Hart. “I had the right size and showed them I had different skills, mainly flexibility with my fingers. I had a lot of sleight of hand skill, rolling coins off of my

fingers, producing cards. As a magician, my hands have a lot of flexibility and muscle control.”

However, Hart fosters few illusions about his chances for a supporting actor’s Oscar at next year’s Academy Awards. One way or another, he wants to keep a hand in the business. There may even be a future, he believes, in special effects. “Effects is really the nature of my work,” said Hart. “It’s very magical, and I am learning a tremendous deal about what these people do. It’s really the next level up for a film magician. My mind works in terms of projecting effects to the audience. So I can readily understand what the effects people are going for.”

Sheldon Teitelbaum

Magician Christopher Hart, whose hand provided “Thing” with on-screen personality.



GUILTY AS

A black comedy ode to James Whale's OLD

By Steve Biodrowski

GUILTY AS CHARGED is a \$1.3 million black comedy, starring Rod Steiger as a God-fearing vigilante who tracks down escaped, pardoned, or paroled murderers and executes them in his home-made electric chair. In the directorial debut of Brian DePalma protegee Sam Irvin, the supporting cast includes Lauren Hutton (*SOMEONE IS WATCHING ME*), Isaac Hayes (*ESCAPE FROM NEW YORK*), Heather Graham (*TWIN PEAKS*), Zelda Rubinstein (*POLTERGEIST*), and a cameo from *SHOCKER*'s Mitch Pileggi (who, ironically, plays one of the murderers Steiger executes). Produced by Randolph Gale and written by Charles Gale (brothers of *BACK TO THE FUTURE*'s Bob Gale), the I.R.S. Media International production, financed by RCA/Columbia in exchange for video rights, was scheduled for theatrical release in October.

Irvin is a horror film fan who published and edited *Bizarre*, a movie fanzine in the mid-'70s. He worked as a production assistant for DePalma on several productions, including *THE FURY* and *DRESSED TO KILL*. With an eye on directing, Irvin developed *STIFF*, an as yet unproduced dead-body comedy written by Brian Clemens, *THE AVENGERS* creator Irvin got to know through an interview for his fanzine. Irvin had found partial backing for the script from Larry Estes at RCA/Columbia Home Video, who put him in touch with I.R.S. Media.

"They liked the script, but they had other projects in development closer to being green-lighted," said Irvin. "They showed me three or four scripts, one of which was Charlie Gale's. I loved it. I saw the possibilities for plugging in all

"I saw it as very over the top," said first-time director Sam Irvin, "a mix of Gothic and German Expressionism with weird angles and elaborate camera moves."



Tyro director Sam Irvin and his stellar cast, Lauren Hutton (l), Rod Steiger as the mad Kallin, seated in the film's unusual electric chair, and Heather Graham (r).

the different influences I've liked in films over the years." Reviewer Henry Sheehan in *The Hollywood Reporter* likened Irvin's film to the "tradition of James Whale's *THE OLD DARK HOUSE* and Robert Fuest's *DR. PHIBES* films."

"There was no description of what this world was going to look like," said Irvin of Gale's script. "I saw it as over-the-top, very stylized. I brought in the

idea of making it a weird cross between Gothic and German Expressionistic influences. I wanted weird angles and elaborate camerawork. I wanted an electric motif throughout the film. Originally, in the script, Kallin [Steiger] would use a rag and chloroform to subdue his victims; I came up with the idea of a stun gun, because he feels that electricity is this godly thing, so he'd use it wherever possible. I also added a lot of

electrical jokes—like when the car breaks down, it's at the corner of Franklyn and Edison.

"The first draft was more serious," said Irvin. "I.R.S. had asked for a more comedic draft, but they still weren't quite happy with the tone. They were looking for a little more subtlety in the humor, and a short film I'd done had the spirit of the Ealing comedies of the '50s. They felt the marriage of my style with this script would work."

Irvin said it was difficult casting the role of Kallin, the film's vigilante madman. Several actors who were approached, including Steiger, turned it down. "He never voiced what his actual fears were," said Irvin of Steiger, who eventually agreed to do the film after some wrangling. "My deduction was he feared it was just going to be an exploitation film. I convinced him I really had a vision in mind, that I wanted to bring in elements of *CALIGARI* and the Universal Gothic horror look. I think he saw that we were serious about what we wanted to do.

"Once he agreed, it changed the whole scope of the film—it allowed us to get the interest of other people, because my being a first-time director was not going to convince too many people to work on the film. Also, we were really charmed—things just worked out really well. When Lauren Hutton came on board, she and I went up and down Rodeo Drive [in Beverly Hills], looking for clothes for her character. At one point, she came out in the dress she wears in the party scene, and we burst out laughing and said it would be the perfect entrance for her character. The label said '\$10,000, Bob Mackie.' The store would not rent it to us, so Lauren said, 'Let me call up Bob.' I said,

CHARGED

DARK HOUSE & Robert Fuest's DR. PHIBES

'You know him?' She said, 'Not really, but I've always wanted to get to know him better.' So she set up a meeting and told him about the film. He loved the idea and just threw open his vaults, wardrobe for the whole film and said, 'Just give me credit and return the clothes clean.'"

The low budget necessitated a tight 3½-week shooting schedule. Despite the expense, Irvin insisted on renting a sound stage for interior scenes, because location shooting would have prevented him from utilizing elaborate camera moves and overhead angles. "Everything was planned out according to the Hitchcock-DePalma school of making your film before you start shooting," said Irvin. "People would look at my shot list and say, 'There's no way you're going to get this!' But I got just about 90% of what I wanted, and the few times I had to streamline were usually not in the death chamber sequences; they were scenes on locations where we didn't have as much control. In some instances, I was even charmed there, because what we ended up doing to save time ended up being more creative."

"The sound stage we eventually got was in Silver Lake [near Hollywood], built in 1959 or 1960 for *WHATEVER HAPPENED TO BABY JANE?* They had just refurbished the studios, and the reason we got a good deal there was that they didn't know exactly when they were going to be reopening, so it was hard for them to book films there in advance. They opened a little earlier than they thought, and they had an extra month with nothing booked."

Working in a studio provided Irvin the luxury of experimenting and expanding on



Steiger as the film's sardonic, Dr. Phibes-like executioner whose mission is to track down escaped, pardoned or paroled murderers and introduce them to his homemade electric chair.

some techniques he had learned from DePalma. "People probably have different names for it, but I call it the 'Staccato Shot.' Instead of zooming in, you have several set-ups and cut in closer. DePalma used it in *THE FURY* and elsewhere. He would usually do three or four. I wanted to carry it further. We did thirty-two set-ups on the congressman [Lyman Ward] getting fried. We set the camera on a track and figured out mathematically how much closer we should be each time. Once we got going it didn't take that long, but it was tough for the actor. He had blood coming out of his eyes and nose, and each time we bumped up closer, I had the make-up people, as you would in stop-motion animation, add more blood to his face."

In the film's original budget I.R.S. had allotted only \$20,000 for the music score. After finishing production, Irvin convinced the financiers to increase the amount. "All the money was put up by RCA/Columbia on a pre-buy for home video," said Irvin. "I convinced them

to add some more money so we could have a full orchestra. The original budget was \$1.2 million. Aside from the music, we came in on budget. They were extremely happy with the film, so they decided to add about \$80,000 to the music budget. We used the Seattle Symphony, a fifty-piece orchestra. We had an incredible composer, Steve Bartek. This is his first break as a full-fledged com-

poser, but he's the guitarist for Oingo-Boingo, and he orchestrated all of Danny Elfman's scores. In fact, Steve's the one who's classically trained, and Danny is not. In a lot of ways, it would be interesting to hear [an Elfman] score not orchestrated by Steve, because you can tell from my score there's a lot of Elfman-sounding influence."

The proliferation of cable and video is making theatrical release of low-budget films an increasingly risky proposition. Still, Irvin hoped that favorable reviews in *Variety* and *The Hollywood Reporter*, along with a Gold Special Jury Award for Best Independent Feature from the Houston International Film Festival, would help *GUILTY AS CHARGED* find an audience amid stiff genre competition at Halloween. Irvin is particularly pleased with Sheehan's *Hollywood Reporter* review. "I'm a big fan of James Whale and Robert Fuest," said Irvin. "I thought it was a great compliment that he mentioned both of them." □

Prisoner James Dybas watches as Kallin henchmen Isaac Hayes and Irwin Keyes lead a reluctant Terrence Ellis toward his appointment with justice delayed.



FILM RATINGS



Primo dinosaur work by the Chiodos in **LAND OF THE LOST**.

who is so innocent he seems to be from another century. Instead, Chucky spends the whole, boring movie killing peripheral characters and announcing himself to the hero (Justin Whalin) so he can be thwarted at every turn. This is a series with contempt for its audience. It doesn't deserve to continue. ● **Judith Harris**

DEAD GIRLS

Directed by Dennis Devine. Rae Don Home Video. 5/91, 90 mins. With: Diana Karanis, Angela Eads, Kay Schaber.

A lousy slasher movie in all areas—plot, acting, production values. Members and hangers-on of a rock group known as the Dead Girls are slain in ways reminiscent of their death-wish song lyrics. First half of film is very cheap and technically inept; things smooth out when the group moves to a remote lakeside cabin (what inspiration!), but the killer just keeps on killing. A 100% waste of time no amount of fast-forwarding can salvage. ○ **David Wilt**

THE FISHER KING

Directed by Terry Gilliam. TriStar. 9/91, 137 mins. With: Jeff Bridges, Robin Williams, Mercedes Ruehl, Amanda Plummer.

If Terry Gilliam's previous films (such as **TIME BANDITS**, **BRAZIL**) felt like headlong tumbles down the rabbit hole, his latest—in which a fallen-from-grace, shock-comedy disc jockey (Jeff Bridges) is recruited by a demented street person (Robin Williams) to rescue the Holy Grail from its Manhattan prison—seems the director's attempt to slow the plummet a bit. That Gilliam succeeds is not necessarily the triumph it would first seem. Those who know Gilliam's work will recognize the medieval grot of the film's first half, during which New York is propelled into its own dark ages (not too surprisingly, the imagery fits the city like a glove). But, as more and more of the plot kicks in—including a key

digression that has Bridges and his girlfriend (Mercedes Ruehl) helping Williams win the hand of the woman he admires from afar (Amanda Plummer)—Gilliam's assurance seems to waiver. By the time the issue of the grail is again raised, feudal Manhattan has faded.

It may not matter by then: it turns out Gilliam *can* handle conventional comedy and romance—no mean feat, admittedly. Yet, these are skills in abundant supply in Hollywood, and for as unconventional a filmmaker as Gilliam, they seem a descent. The film is never less than good (and when Michael Jeter, as an aging chorus boy, gets to belt out "Rose's Turn," it's considerably better), yet one can't help but feel that something that sets Gilliam apart has been lost. ● **Dan Persons**

THE GREEN MAN

Directed by Elijah Moshinsky. A&E (cable TV). 6/91, 3 hrs. With: Albert Finney, Linda Marlowe, Sarah Berger, Michael Hordern, Nicky Henson.

Perhaps the hardest type of movie to pull off is the ghost story, especially in these technological times, but this three-hour co-production between the BBC and A&E cable achieved a major success. A pre-credit sequence, which bears a marked resemblance to those diabolical trees from **THE EVIL DEAD**, set expectations which were easily met by the leisurely paced tale, based on a novel by Kingsley Amis. Albert Finney plays the womanizing, alcoholic host of the titular British inn, alleged to be haunted. Malcolm Bradbury's script walks a fine line between letting the viewer know whether the ghost is real or whether it's all a hallucination brought on by Finney's appalling consumption of alcohol. Michael Culver is convincing as the ghost, in surprisingly muted, minimalist makeup by Jean Speak. Often without speaking at all, Culver conveys

a cold menace.

Credit for the eerie atmosphere must be shared by Richard Manton's sound and Tim Souster's music, and a wonderfully textured performance from Finney, as he goes from befuddled skepticism to believer. If you missed this, you are fortunate that A&E continually re-runs its programs for months and even years, so keep your eyes peeled for the next airing of a truly compelling modern ghost story. ●●●● **Judith Harris**

LAND OF THE LOST

Directed by Ernest Farino. ABC (TV). 9/91, 30 mins. With: Timothy Bottoms, Jennifer Dragan, Robert Gavin, Ed Gale.

ABC revives the Sid and Marty Krofft series which ran on NBC Saturday mornings from 1974 to 1977. The good news is that the Chiodo Brothers are not only co-producing, but also doing the dinosaurs, and they are wonderful, fluid and as realistic as you're likely to see on Saturday mornings. The bad news is no one rethought the plot or characters, so we have the same bickering siblings (Jennifer Dragan and Robert Galvin) and their noble father, played inexpressively by Timothy Bottoms.

Being a Krofft show, there are inevitable cutesy-poo characters in suits, including Tasha (Ed Gale)—so close to baby Sinclair from **DINOSAURS** that Disney/Henson ought to sue—and apeboy Stink (Bobby Porter), called Chaka in the original series. By the third show, the Porter family was already treating the dinosaurs like unthreatening denizens of some drive-through zoo. The talking lizard villains of the original series, the Sleestacks, provide the menace. The writing is dismal, but the show has undoubted visual appeal for young children and those of us willing to put up with a lot for some great dinosaur footage. ● **Judith Harris**

Paul Satterfield and the low-rent reptilian gladiator of **ARENA**.



LATE FOR DINNER

Directed by W. D. Richter. Columbia. 9/91, 98 mins. With: Brian Wimmer, Peter Berg, Bo Brundin, Marcia Gay Harden, Colleen Flynn.

Slight and sincere, this appealing time travel romance about two friends who return home after 29 years in a cryogenic freeze marks a pleasant departure for frenetic director W. D. Richter (**BUCKAROO BANZAI**). Although lackadaisically paced, this effects-less romp from 1962 to 1991 excels with solid dramatics and affecting characters, especially Brian Wimmer and Peter Berg in the lead roles. But the film's small-scale visuals and low-key manner make it better suited for the video rental shelf. ●● **Chip Merriwether**

RADIO FLYER

Directed by Richard Donner. Columbia. 2/92. With: Elijah Wood, Joseph Mazello, Adam Baldwin, John Heard, Lorraine Bracco.

Despite a much-publicized launching that crashed with a mid-production director change, the tumult has spawned a tender, yet often harrowing ode to childhood, sensitively directed by Richard Donner from a powerful, thoughtful script by cashiered director David Mickey Evans. The film is buoyed by the first-rate performances of youngsters Elijah Wood and Joseph Mazello, starring as two brothers whose fervent belief in childhood magic becomes their only hope for survival against the drunken tirades of their new stepfather (played by an ominous Adam Baldwin). The film works both as a wistful, bittersweet fantasy about the wonderment and resilience of youth, and as a hardhitting, cautionary tale of the brutal, senseless abuse of children making this a rare mix of fantasy and human drama, two ingredients always at odds in lesser films. Here the chemistry proves a winning formula. Reviewed in nearly completed workprint form, the film looks



Tom Towles in director John McNaughton's darkly funny shocker, **THE BORROWER**.

to be the first worthy successor to **FIELD OF DREAMS** for the '90s. It is a brave, commercially risky project that neither sidesteps nor sugarcoats the touchy issues it raises. Because of its less-than-appealing subject matter, Columbia bumped the film's planned fall release to February, where it has a better chance of finding its audience. ●●●● **Chip Merriwether**

SOLAR CRISIS

Directed by Richard C. Serafini. Shochiku-Fuji. 8/90, 118 mins. With: Charlton Heston, Jack Palance, Peter Boyle, Tim Matheson.

This Japanese-American joint venture, produced by Richard Edlund of LA's Boss Film is interesting in concept but stilted and stodgy in execution. Based on a Japanese novel, perhaps the script lost something in the English translation. Filmed in Japan last year, there seems little prospect of the movie opening stateside. When the sun begins to overheat the Earth, a spaceship piloted by Tim Matheson is sent on a desperate mission. Meanwhile, Matheson's runaway son wanders through the desert, finally stumbling upon a conspiracy by Peter Boyle, who wants to sabotage the mission because the crisis has proved extremely profitable for his company. Edlund's effects are good, and there are some tense moments, but the separate storylines take too long to intersect, and the payoff when they do is too little too late. The actors do their best, but you get the feeling not many of them will be listing this one on their resume. ● **Steve Biodrowski**

FREDDY'S DEAD!

With a hit like this, can New Line resist the idea of killing Freddy again?

By Steve Biodrowski

It was the kind of juxtaposition that invites bad puns. One could hardly resist declaring that the weekend boxoffice was "dead" when the number one and two slots were occupied by *FREDDY'S DEAD: THE FINAL NIGHTMARE* and Paramount's *DEAD AGAIN*, respectively. Opening Friday, September the 13th, the sixth installment of the *NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET* series grossed \$13 million in its first three days of release, well ahead of its predecessors, though still behind New Line Cinema's other franchise, the *Ninja Turtles*. "We were definitely pleasantly surprised," admitted New Line's director of development Michael DeLuca, who acted as screenwriter and executive producer for Krueger's demise. "The fact that it's the last and that there was a two-year gap [since Part 5] helped a lot."

Also boosting the weekend receipts were two clever promotional events on opening day: in Los Angeles, Mayor Tom Bradley signed a proclamation declaring Freddy Krueger Day; in New York, Alice Cooper gave a Times Square concert promoting his appearance as Freddy's stepfather. "Alice Cooper is a big fan of the series, and he always wanted to be in a Freddy film—it seemed like a logical cameo for him,"

said DeLuca of the casting. "It was his idea to do the concert—that caught us by surprise. He is a tireless source of energy and goodwill for the film and for the genre. It was a nice treat and a big surprise for the people in New York."

A bit more controversial was the ceremony outside Mann's Chinese Theatre in Hollywood, during which Robert Englund, wearing the emblematic Elm Street glove, accepted the signed proclamation from a mayor's aide. Among others protesting the declaration of Freddy Krueger Day was former '60s activist-turned-self-styled guardian of public morals Jerry Rubin, who has recently managed to get his name and face back in the news by protesting the release of *CHILD'S PLAY II* and *LEATHERFACE: THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE*



Robert Englund as Freddy Krueger with Robert Shaye and Sara Risher, the New Line Cinema executives who developed the series' money-making horror formula.

III. Ever the articulated defender of the horror genre, Englund took issue with those who suggested that the proclamation glorifies or encourages real-life violence, stating, according to the *Los Angeles Times*, that "We have to separate crime reality from movie escapism."

Englund is familiar with Rubin's attitude, which he dubbed "the Marin County mentality, which thinks that horror films are responsible for the state of the world today. You want to ask these people, 'What was Jack the Ripper watching?' There were more crimes committed in the name of the Bible than were ever committed because somebody watched *THE EXORCIST* too many times."

Though the Friday the 13th release date might seem like a jab at Paramount's now-defunct rival series, DeLuca

insisted the date was a coincidence. "We try to pick the release dates for all of our films, because we're an independent, based on what the majors are doing," he explained. "Friday the 13th just happened to be the most empty weekend."

The impressive results might lead one to suspect that the reports of Krueger's death have been greatly exaggerated, and as recently as Part 5, New Line chief Robert Shaye was hoping to build the series' popularity to the point at which it would perpetuate itself for many years to come, along the lines of the James Bond films. Now, however, New Line insists that *THE FINAL NIGHTMARE* will remain final. "It was a corporate decision," according to DeLuca, "We became realistic about the limitations of the genre; frankly, it's not James Bond. Bob Shaye felt that with this kind of series it's better to go out with a little creative spark left, rather than when you're old and tired."

"Some people would say we went out old and tired anyway!" DeLuca continued with a laugh, admitting, "I always think sequels are cheesy to begin with. You have an original idea that works; then you spend the next ten years ripping it off. What I've always liked about the *ELM STREET* movies—and that's why I don't mind working on them—is

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Englund plays with the series' "great graphics" in Part VI, the last says New Line.



REVIEWS

New Line says goodbye to their dream-crashing party animal

FREDDY'S DEAD: THE FINAL NIGHTMARE

A New Line Cinema Release. 9/91, 90 mins. In Dolby & color. Director, Rachel Talalay. Producers, Robert Shaye, Aron Warner. Executive producer, Michael DeLuca. Director of photography, Declan Quinn. Editor, Janice Hampton. Production designer, C.J. Strawn. Art Director, James R. Barrows. Special visual effects, Dream Quest Images. 3-D supervision & special visual effects, the Chandler Group. 3-D miniatures, Stetson Visual Services, Computer graphic special effects, Video Image. Snake demon puppets, Jim Towler. Dream demons animation, Pacific Data Images. House transformation, True Vision Effects. Freddy Krueger's makeup created by David B. Miller. Special makeup effects, Magic Media Industries. Set design, Rebecca Carriaga. Costume design, Nanrose Buchman. Music, Brian May. Screenplay by Michael DeLuca from Talalay's story based on characters created by Wes Craven.

Freddy Krueger	Robert Englund
Maggie	Lisa Zane
John	Shon Greenblatt
Tracy	Lezlie Deane
Carlos	Ricky Dean Logan
Spencer	Breckin Meyer
Doc	Yaphet Kotto



Krueger's daughter (Lisa Zane), dispatching Dad in an entertaining 3-D production number.

by Thomas Doherty

With nary a nod to Curtis Mayfield, the sixth and purportedly last of New Line's obscenely profitable horror series finds pizza-faced monster from the id Freddy Krueger, bastard son of a thousand maniacs, *kaput*, terminated, *finito*, blown to sausage bits and anchovies. The kibosh, assured the MTV tied-in ad campaign, is to be put on the razor-sharp fingers and rapier tongue of the dream-crashing party animal. Really.

To proclaim a day, or a sleepless night, of national mourning is excessive; a modest wake and a raised glass of tribute seems more in order for the Krueger. After all, by the substandards of teen-targeted horror films, the NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET series has been a pretty classy sextet. Wes Craven's original was an exhilarating wake-up call for a genre which, back in 1984, had already become a by-the-numbers cliché. Off stride since THE HILLS HAVE EYES (1977), Craven brought two requisite elements to body count cinema: psychological depth and victim identification. Dreams have always been horror's home territory and yoking teen dreams to teen terror was a drive-in Saturday inspiration. For their part, the teenagers (especially the girls) were flesh and blood characters, not mannequins for the implantations of exploding blood pellets. Unlike the Crystal

Lake campers (please, Jason, kill them painfully), the Elm Street kids were actually tolerable for whole minutes on screen. Meanwhile, Robert Englund, who looks better with the burn ward makeup than without it, stumbled into the role of a lifetime.

Rather than playing the standard sequel strategy—cut the budget and make a quick kill rip-off—New Line invested for the long haul. Throughout an exponentially elaborate, expensive, and baroque series of metamorphoses (including a stop-motion puppet), Freddy emerged as a man of wealth, taste, and tart witticisms. In its best moments, the series managed to conjure the weird realm of deep REM sleep, a zone that seems midway between sleeping and waking. It was appropriate that the series' trademark was the "false wake from slumber scene," an ambush that repeatedly caught audiences napping.

The films have always had, as Freddy notes in *numero* six, "great graphics." Like an MGM musical, New Line's NIGHTMARES were built around huge production numbers, slick high-tech dream sequences featuring Freddy dancing around and cutting into slower moving partners. Since the line between adolescent nightmare and high school reality is thin anyway, the stock artifacts and experiences of teenage America—school buses, classrooms, lockers,

and lavatories—provided the raw material for a dream work of Daliesque dimensions and Kafkaesque convolutions. In the infernal, industrial boiler room atmosphere of Freddy's dreamy digs, waterbeds sucked sleepers under and television sets crashed into no-longer-talking heads. The not so secret ingredient in the formula was to set up some signature traits for a crew of likely teen victims.

The sixth outing is a memorable session, though the plot on which to hang the dream sessions is a snooze. First-time director Rachel Talalay, who produced Parts 3 and 4, knows her Kruegeralia—smartass kickers, dreamboat choreography, rise-and-shine wake up calls. Flashbacks root out little Freddy's primal scenes, a psychobiography marked by a hamster-squishing childhood and masochistic beatings from evil stepfather Alice Cooper. As the good citizens of Springwood torch the corporeal Freddy, a gaggle of free-floating pagan dream snakes give him the power to hyperdrive through REM space.

Of course, the money sequence highlight is the so-called 3-D Freddyvision. Since BWANA DEVIL and THE CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON back in the '50s, the perennial problem with the 3-D, a theatrical sales angle that comes back around for a brief exploitation blip every decade or so, is that the

glasses are a hassle for the already glassed, and everyone gets a headache. Also, what 3-D theorist William Paul calls the "aesthetics of emergence" dictate that objects continually be thrust, propelled, or hurled from the screen (recall the hovering eyeball on spear projecting from the screen in FRIDAY THE 13TH—3D). With the narrative subordinate to objects "comin' at ya," the 3-D film becomes an eye-straining exercise in "Oooh—" Talalay and screenwriter Michael DeLuca sidestepped the feature length problem with a gimmicky innovation schlockmeister William Castle might envy. About three quarters of the way into FREDDY'S DEAD, the spectator dons glasses in tandem with the screen hero. Already in the film's dreamscape, the "matched" donning of the 3-D eyeglasses makes for a shared and truly in-depth immersion experience. (The usher at the screening I attended cautioned me to don the glasses *only* at the end—apparently some low IQ Freddy fans were watching *the entire film* in 3-D).

The 3-D wears well—if you like squiggly airborne snakes—but the choice of heroines is bewildering. What kind of generational loyalties are these when the adult shrink Maggie (Lisa Zane) and not the athletic teenager Tracy (Lezlie Dean) gets to whack Freddy into oblivion? Freddy killed more teenagers than bad driving: one of their number was entitled to last tag.

So, is this Freddy's final slumber or another false wake up call? On the one hand, big star cameos by Roseanne and Tom Arnold and Johnny Depp add to the sense of a last, pull-out-all-the-stops send off. Also, Robert Englund has donated his striped sweater and scissorhands to the Museum of the Moving Image. On the other hand, New Line reportedly filmed a coda, later deleted from the final film, of the dream snakes approaching a tearful child and coaxing, "Hey, kid—need some friends?" Profit, not principle, will determine whether "Freddy RIP" means "rest in peace" or "revival in progress." □

Director Kenneth Branagh on DEAD AGAIN, Sending-Up Sir Alfred Hitchcock

By Dann Gire

In his supernatural drama DEAD AGAIN, British director and actor Kenneth Branagh speaks in a precise, natural American accent that rolls off the tongue as easily as the English inflections came forth when he played the title role in his Oscar-winning HENRY V. But during publicity tours on behalf of DEAD AGAIN, last summer, Branagh politely refused radio requests to speak in his American accent. "When you do something like that, you just give away a little bit of the magic," Branagh explained.

"When you go into that darkened room, that's where the magic occurs. If you start giving away the tricks, so much as they are, you annoy the gods somewhere."

The gods are not people Kenneth Branagh wants to annoy, especially when one of them, American filmmaker Sydney Pollack, came to his rescue in a moment of studio panic over the use of black and white flashbacks in DEAD AGAIN. "He was the 400-pound gorilla who saved my bacon on the film," Branagh said of Pollack. "The whole black and white issue was one which the studio was uncertain about. Sydney was a very persuasive arguer on my behalf. Then we were six-tenths of the way there, but stuck. He [Pollack] gave a couple of notes on how to do it. That solved it. We didn't take his notes all the way, but it got us over. He reminded us that we must not be afraid to do radical things, fundamental things."

It took radical, fundamental changes to make DEAD AGAIN into the commercial success (and one acclaimed by critics, although not universally) it turned out to be. Once Branagh had his principal photography in the can, the problems began to mount in the editing room. "It was agony putting it together," the 31-year-old, Irish-born Branagh said. "When we edited it together, there were five distinctive cuts which changed dramatically through a six-month period. Midway through, I really was lost. I realized we were in a very dangerous area.



Branagh behind the camera, in his Mad Magician-like flashback makeup as a '40s composer.

Bringing all the different elements together [romance, comedy, suspense] was difficult. The balance was all-important. For three or four goes, we couldn't get it. It was too funny. Or we made it too bleak. Then too bizarre. I knew we had all the elements, but putting it together was the difficult thing. We previewed it. Then we re-worked it. The difference between the first preview and the last preview was night and day. To get there was like trying to unlock a safe. We knew we had the movie all there, but it wasn't balanced."

Soon after DEAD AGAIN opened in England, a critic approached Branagh to ask him "Is your movie supposed to be funny? Or is it supposed to be a thriller?" Branagh would say both. "Even though the period of time when I was banging my head against the wall, I knew the right picture would emerge. You learn to ignore the arbitrary panic that comes around. Obviously, the studio [Paramount Pictures] went crazy when it didn't work straight away. But I have to give them their due, they let me get on with it. They were patient. They hung in there until we got it right."

Branagh said he was compelled to make DEAD AGAIN the moment he read Scott Frank's script. Recalled Branagh, "For me, it leaped off the page. 'Yes, yes,' I said, 'it's weird, but I can see it!' I had a picture in my mind. The script had this affection for a time when movies were a bit more audacious."

designer we wanted to do an Edgar Allan Poe thing. You know, the extra towers. Get the gorgons. Weird faces, strange statues. The macabre gates. Gotta have the gates. It's our Xanadu. If you don't have these things, you're making a generic thriller. The plot will be too bizarre to sustain a documentary look. It must be removed from reality. It's not realism, I don't know what ism it is."

To get it right, Branagh asked composer Patrick Doyle for the kind of lush score Bernard Herrmann might have written for the likes of Hitchcock. "I needed a big [music] score here," said Branagh. "By the end, we must

have earned the right to use an opera with crazy, mad, demonic voices tying up the movie in some way. We had to make the buildings sort of loom at night. We put some stained glass in windows. Let's just get all of those little touches and let's refer to other movies. Create that world that I grew up with.

"I was never a great western devotee or a science fiction devotee. I love this kind of movie and the best of the light comedies. This script reminded me of the kind of motion pictures I grew up watching on television, especially the Hitchcock pictures. If you watch VERTIGO now, or NOTORIOUS, they're sort of outrageous. And their sound tracks are big and bold and melodramatic. Movie-movies. And we were trying to make a movie-movie here."

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Branagh's approach evokes classic works of cinema from CITIZEN KANE to just about every film Hitchcock ever made. "I wanted it to be full-blooded, but not overblown in the way that kind of threw people," said Branagh. "This should be like a rollercoaster ride where this premise of reincarnation, which some people would regard as basically preposterous, would be something that breathless pace and direction would carry you along and hopefully you would not mind it. Obviously, we've all got that logic Nazi in us and you can always find inconsistencies."

Early on, Branagh said he realized that to pull off something as dicey as DEAD AGAIN, the stops had to be pulled out. Noted Branagh, "The moment we found the mansion we wanted for the film, I told the

Hypnotist Derek Jacobi, with private eye Branagh and wife Emma Thompson.



A passionless fusion of neo-film noir and Hollywood romance

DEAD AGAIN

A Paramount Pictures release, 8/91, 111 mins. In Dolby & color. Director, Kenneth Branagh. Producers, Lindsay Moran & Charles H. Maguire. Executive producer, Sydney Pollack. Director of photography, Matthew F. Leonetti. Editor, Peter E. Berger. Production designer, Tim Harvey. Art director, Sidney Z. Litwack. Set designers, Henry Alberti, Joseph Hubbard & Eric Orbon. Costume designer, Phyllis Dalton. Music, Patrick Doyle. Sound, Gerald G. Jost. Screenplay by Scott Frank.

Mike Church/
Roman Strauss Kenneth Branagh
Grace/Margaret Strauss Emma Thompson
Gary Baker Andy Garcia
Franklyn Madson Derek Jacobi
Dr. Cozy Carlisle Robin Williams
Piccolo Pete Wayne Knight
Inga Hanna Schygulla

by Charles D. Leayman

British *wunderkind* Kenneth Branagh seems hell-bent to take on the cinema's sacred cows. With his tersely authoritative debut feature, HENRY V, he crossed swords with post-WWII Britain's official masterpiece and its illustrious mentor, Laurence Olivier; the result was revisionist filmmaking of the first order. In DEAD AGAIN, the ambitious Branagh pays tribute to another fellow (if expatriate) Brit, Alfred Hitchcock. But this time the nod falls resoundingly flat.

Certainly, the Hitchcock territory has been mapped with varying degrees of success many times before, most notably by Brian De Palma (as well as myriad less technically grandstanding directors). But a staleness pervades DEAD AGAIN that has little to do with the recurrence of Hitchcock imitators, and everything to do with Branagh's inadequate grasp of what at bottom drove Hitchcock's narratives: namely sexual and moral passion. Even such failed Hitchcock replays as De Palma's OBSESSION catches the bubbling undercurrent of painfully ambivalent eroticism that DEAD AGAIN so singularly lacks.

The film begins with promise. To Patrick Doyle's exuberantly neo-Romantic score, the credits unveil a deliciously overblown, faux-1940s montage of giant headlines that set up the dual roles played by Branagh and his actress wife Emma Thompson in a thriller that suggests the *noir* romance of Hitchcock's VER-TIGO. What's most surprising about DEAD AGAIN is how little genuine heat Branagh injects into his frankly preposterous plot. And heat, passion, eroticism (however repressed) are surely among the keynotes of the Hitchcockian melody that Branagh



Thompson in her earlier life (or is it Branagh's?), with reporter Andy Garcia.

wishes to play. To be sure, VER-TIGO's plot is hardly a paragon of plausibility. But Hitchcock undermines (and placates) the viewer's skepticism with a convulsive meditation on *l'amour fou*, on the dire obsessiveness of blind romantic love. The ostensible plot is camouflage for Hitchcock's dissection of something quite other.

Branagh, on the other hand, opts for a hip fusion of neo-film *noir* and Hollywood-bred romance that finally does justice to neither. There's a curious coldness to the movie intensified by Branagh's

smugly self-congratulatory air and Thompson's (here) vacant beauty. The pair were edgily enchanting in HENRY V's climactic courtship scene, as Branagh's boyish but calculating monarch plied Thompson's seductively resistant princess with talk of power and passion. But translated to California's balmy latitudes, their onscreen interaction congeals as if the exchange of Shakespeare's weighty words for Hollywood's high artifice had radically unnerved them. Even the regal Thompson, with her aristocratic bearing and

Suzu Parker cheekbones, seems subdued and vague, as if she didn't quite get the point.

Indeed, DEAD AGAIN's actors (with two exceptions) are consistently underwhelming. Andy Garcia, as a cynically deadpan reporter gives his underwritten character a correspondingly malnourished reading (not that Scott Frank's by-the-numbers screenplay gives Garcia much to do). The old-man makeup in which he ultimately appears is aggressively hideous, and the "gag" of inserting a cigarette into the voice-box hole in his neck and then exhaling smoke, is more disgusting than blackly humorous.

Derek Jacobi's mannered unctuousness as the villain of the piece could benefit from the small-screen restraint of his PBS appearances (notably the brilliant I, CLAUDIUS); writ large on the movie screen his unrelieved archness merely annoys Hanna Schygulla, the robustly incandescent German actress who stoked the fires of many Rainer Werner Fassbinder epics in the 1970's (especially THE MARRIAGE OF MARIA BRAUN), reduced to a mere character part as a glorified maid, her somewhat swollen features also fated for old-age makeup (though fortunately not

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Boxoffice Survey: Genre Continues Slump After 2-Year High

An analysis of the Top Grossing films, as reported in *Variety's* "Weekend Boxoffice Report" reveals that in the first three quarters of 1991, revenue from horror, fantasy and science fiction accounted for 35.5% of all money earned at the boxoffice (45.4% last year), a 9.9% drop in the genre's market share, leveling-off after a two-year high.

Revenue from horror rose a remarkable 46.1% over last year's boxoffice take, due mostly to SILENCE OF THE LAMBS, which continues to pull in impressive boxoffice dollars. Fantasy revenues are down 37.3% from last year, with ROBIN HOOD not doing as well as last year's fantasy blockbuster GHOST. Science fiction is having a tough time competing with last year's extraordinary revenue take despite the

TOP GENRE FILMS OF '91

TERMINATOR 2 (Tri, sf, 14) ..	\$197,063,519
ROBIN HOOD: PRINCE OF THIEVES (Wb, f, 17)	\$160,340,796
SILENCE OF THE LAMBS (Ori, h, 33)	\$130,726,716
SLEEPING WITH THE ENEMY (Fox, h, 24)	\$100,381,912
THE NAKED GUN 2½: THE SMELL OF FEAR (Par, f, 15) ..	\$ 85,297,770
TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES II (NI, sf, 19)	\$ 78,582,619
101 DALMATIANS (Bv, f, 12) ..	\$ 58,700,114
• MISERY (Col, h, 24)	\$ 50,825,592
THE ROCKETEER (Bv, sf, 17) ..	\$ 46,437,181
BILL & TED'S BOGUS JOURNEY (Ori, f, 12) ..	\$ 37,537,875
DEAD AGAIN (Par, h, 7)	\$ 32,282,059
FREDDY'S DEAD (NI h, 4)	\$ 29,534,726
• EDWARD SCISSORHANDS (Fox, f, 13) ..	\$ 26,723,705
PROBLEM CHILD 2 (U, f, 13) ..	\$ 24,411,267
• LOOK WHO'S TALKING TOO (Tri, f, 20) ..	\$ 18,624,396
THE NEVERENDING STORY II (Wb, f, 15)	\$ 17,292,945
HUDSON HAWK (Tri, sf, 11) ..	\$ 17,218,916
THE FISHER KING (Tri, f, 3) ..	\$ 16,089,470
SWITCH (Wb, f, 8)	\$ 15,486,159
CHILD'S PLAY 3 (U, h, 6)	\$ 13,856,170
DROP DEAD FRED (NI, f, 13) ..	\$ 13,846,383
• GHOST (Par, f, 16)	\$ 11,319,083
WARLOCK (Tmrk, h, 19)	\$ 9,027,552

success of TERMINATOR 2. Science fiction's market share is still on a par with the four years prior to 1990.

In the third quarter of 1991, science fiction accounted for 5.2% of all films, 11.1% of all receipts; fantasy films accounted for 10.4% of all films and 13.4% of all receipts; while horror accounted for 6.0% of all films and 11.06% of all receipts. The total U.S. and Canadian boxoffice take of top-grossing genre films in the *Variety* totals are listed at left (through 10/4). For purposes of breakdown by genre, titles are indicated as horror (h), fantasy (f), and science fiction (sf), followed by number of weeks each title made the "Weekend Boxoffice Report" since January. Films first released in 1990 are indicated by an *, but figures do not include prior year earnings.

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TITLE	STARS	CHAPTERS	DATE
A WOMAN IN GRAY	ARLINE PERRY H. SELL	15	1920
ACE DRUMMOND	JOHN KING	13	1936
ADVENTURES OF REX AND RINTY	RIN-TIN-TIN JR.	12	1935
ADVENTURES OF SMILIN' JACK	TOM BROWN	13	1943
ADVENTURES OF TARZAN (SILENT)	ELMO LINCOLN	FEATURE	1921
ADVENTURES OF THE FLYING CADETS	JOHNNY DOWNS	13	1943
BLACK COON, THE	RALPH GRAVES	15	1936
BLAKE OF SCOTLAND YARD	RALPH BYRD	15	1937
BURN 'EM UP BARNES	JACK MULHALL	12	1934
CALL OF THE SAVAGE	NOAH BERRY JR.	12	1935
CLUTCHING HAND, THE	JACK MULHALL	15	1936
THE CUSTERS LAST STAND	REX LEASE	15	1936
DEVIL HORSE, THE	HARRY CAREY	12	1932
DICK TRACY	RALPH BYRD	15	1937
DON WINSLOW OF THE COAST GUARD	DON TERRY	13	1943
DON WINSLOW OF THE NAVY	DON TERRY	12	1942
FIGHTING MARINES	GRANT WITHERS	12	1935
FIGHTING WITH KIT CARSON	JOHN MACK BROWN	12	1933
FLAMING FRONTIERS	JOHN MACK BROWN	15	1938
FLASH GORDON CONQUERS THE UNIVERSE	BUSTER CRABBE	12	1940
GALLOPING GHOST, THE	HAROLD (RED) GRANGE	12	1931
GANG BUSTERS	KENT TAYLOR	13	1942
GREAT ALASKAN MYSTERY, THE	RALPH MORGAN	13	1944
GREEN ARCHER, THE	VICTOR JURY	15	1940
GREEN HORNET, THE	GORDEN JONES	13	1940
HOLT OF THE SECRET SERVICE	JACK HOLT	15	1941
HURRICANE EXPRESS, THE	JOHN WAYNE	12	1932
JUNIOR GAIEN OF THE AIR	THE DEAD END KIDS	12	1942
JUNIOR GAIEN	THE DEAD END KIDS	12	1940
KING OF THE KONGO	WALTER MILLER	10	1929
KING OF THE WILD	WALTER MILLER	12	1930
LAST FRONTIER	LON CHANEY JR.	12	1932
LAST OF THE MOHICANS	HARRY CAREY	12	1932
LAW OF THE WILD, THE	RIN-TIN-TIN JR.	12	1934
LIGHTNING BRYCE (SILENT)	JACK HOXIE	15	1919
LIGHTNING WARRIOR, THE	RIN-TIN-TIN	12	1931
LONE DEFENDER, THE	RIN-TIN-TIN	12	1930
LONE RANGER RIDES AGAIN, THE	ROBERT LIVINGSTONE	15	1939
LONE RANGER, THE	LEE POWELL	15	1938
LOST CITY, THE	KANE RICHMOND	12	1935
LOST JUNGLE, THE	CLOYE BEATTY	15	1942
MASTER KEY, THE	MILVINE STONE	13	1945
MIRACLE RIDER, THE	TOM MUD	15	1935
MYSTERY MOUNTAIN	KEN MAYNARD	12	1934
MYSTERY OF THE DOUBLE CROSS	MOLE KING	15	1917
MYSTERY SQUADRON	LEON BARRY	12	1933
MYSTERY TROOPER	ROBERT FRAZER	10	1931
NEW ADVENTURES OF TARZAN OFFICER 444	HERMAN BIX BEN WILSON N. BERBER	10 15 10	1926 1939 1939
OREGON TRAIL, THE	JOHN MACK BROWN	15	1939
OVERLAND MAIL	LON CHANEY JR.	15	1942
PAINTED STALLION, THE	RAY "CRASH" CORRIGAN	12	1937
PERILS OF PAULINE (9 CHAP. AVAIL)	PEARL WHITE	9	1914
PERILS OF PAULINE	EVELYN KNAPP	12	1934
PHANTOM CREEPS, THE	BELA LUGOSI	12	1939
PHANTOM EMPIRE	GENE AUTRY	12	1935
PHANTOM OF THE WEST	TOM TYLER	10	1930
QUEEN OF THE JUNGLE	REED HOWES	12	1935
RADAR MEN FROM THE MOON	GEORGE WALLACE	12	1952
RAIDERS OF GHOST CITY	DENNIS MOORE	13	1944
RETURN OF CHANDU	BELA LUGOSI	12	1934
RIDERS OF DEATH VALLEY	DICK FORAN	15	1941
ROBINSON CRUSOE OF CLIPPER ISLAND	MALA	14	1936
S.O.S. COAST GUARD	RALPH BYRD	12	1937
SCOUTS TO THE RESCUE	JACKIE COOPER	12	1939
SEA RAIDERS	THE DEAD END KIDS	12	1941
SHADOW OF CHINA TOWN	BELA LUGOSI	15	1936
SHADOW OF THE EAGLE	JOHN WAYNE	12	1932
SIGN OF THE WOLF	REX LEASE	10	1931
SKY RAIDERS	DONALD WOODS	15	1941
TARZAN THE TIGER	FRANK MERRILL	15	1929
THREE MUSKETEERS, THE	JOHN WAYNE	12	1933
UNDERSEA KINGDOM	RAY "CRASH" CORRIGAN	12	1936
VANISHING LEGION, THE	HARRY CAREY	12	1931
VIGILANTES ARE COMING, THE	ROBERT LIVINGSTONE	12	1935
WHISPERING SHADOW, THE	BELA LUGOSI	12	1933
WINNERS OF THE WEST	DICK FORAN	13	1940
WOLF DOG, THE	RIN-TIN-TIN JR.	12	1933
YOUNG EAGLES	JIM VANCE	12	1934
ZORRO RIDES AGAIN	JOHN CARROLL	12	1937
ZORRO'S BLACK WHIP	GEORGE J. LEWIS	12	1944
ZORRO'S FIGHTING LEGION	REED HADLEY	12	1939

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THE LAWMOWER MAN

continued from page 7

story about virtual reality—I tried to imagine—this is the kind of story he would write. There are a lot of homages to King in this movie. It very much falls in that genre, but it's not horror."

To bring Leonard's high-tech vision to the screen, Allied/Lane/Pringle Productions hired five computer graphics companies on a budget of \$10 million. Angel Studios and XAOS, Inc. provide the major portion of the effects, including eight different computer environments and the world's first computer-generated "provocative sex scene" between Fahey and his girl (Jenny Wright of NEAR DARK).

Summed up Leonard, "Basically we've made an original film that has within it the kernel of where it came from. That was the only way I could make this film successful. I couldn't make it about a guy who eats gophers. I mean, it's a great little short story, but it doesn't translate to be anything more than a TALES FROM THE CRYPT [episode]." □

THE NAKED LUNCH

continued from page 13

THE FLY. "The effects will be massive," said Cronenberg. "In terms of complexity they will be the most ambitious I have ever utilized. Burroughs used a lot of imagery from science fiction, but in an odd way. I certainly could have lived without doing another special effects movie but when I started to write, it became unavoidable. There are many creatures. Some are called mugwumps, which are very large, the original lounge lizard, although not exactly a lizard." Cronenberg declined to elaborate further.

"There are some other things you won't find in the book," said Cronenberg. "You cannot make a strictly literal translation of this material to the screen. It's impossible. It has become a fusion of me and Burroughs. That is really the best kind of creature making because we then have created a third creature." Cronenberg smiled at the thought. □

GUYVER EFFECTS

continued from page 47

action was filmed at six frames per second with Armstrong lip-syncing to a prerecorded dialogue track run at one-quarter speed. The change-over frames between live and puppet footage were streaked and dissolved optically. "If you know that the effect is coming, it is by no means perfect," said Rae, "but Steve designed such a dynamic shot that you're too busy picking your jaw off the floor to worry about how it was done."

Lighting the miniature for animation proved to be a challenge even with the meticulous notation of light positions and filters during the live-action shoot. "You can't miniaturize light," said Rae, "only its effect on objects. Where seven lights were used for the live action set-up, I had to use twenty-three different lighting units to duplicate the same effect in miniature. Since my shooting area was only nineteen feet wide, it didn't leave much room to put lights where they needed to be in scale to the live-action. For instance, if a light was sitting five feet from the actor, that equivalent would only be a foot and a half from the puppet, meaning that once the camera pulls back a scaled equivalent of 18 feet, it would be in the shot. In some cases it actually took three lights on the miniature to

do what one unit accomplished on the set because the units had to be set farther back and their beams narrowed and overlapped to get them to read like the live-action."

Goto sculpted the fourteen pieces of miniature body armor based on the full-size suit designed and sculpted by co-director Steve Wang. The miniature pieces were vacuumformed out of paper-thin styrene to facilitate near weightlessness and painted to duplicate Wang's stylized paint designs.

"Steve had a specific pattern he wanted the tentacles to emulate in the extended position, sort of like a butterfly's outstretched wings," said Rae. "I thought the best way to accomplish this was to place them in the end position and animate backwards, which I had done for a couple of shots in BEETLEJUICE." After testing various solutions, Rae finally settled on using lengths of brass rod anchored into a machined, fan-shaped collar behind the puppet. With each frame of animation, Goto's body armor was animated backward along a pre-calibrated path described by the tentacle shape, and the protruding rods snapped off. "In all it took only ten hours with the help of another animator to record the animation," said Rae. "We got it on the first take. So all the homework really paid off." □

FREDDY'S DEAD

continued from page 56

that, even when they're incoherent, they're ambitious. This one was the most expensive, because of the 3-D, and unlike the others it had more optical effects than makeup, because it's more fantasy-oriented."

The finality of the latest sequel would seem to be confirmed by New Line's editing room decision to end on the line of dialogue, "Freddy's dead," dropping the script's denouement, wherein the Dream Demons descend upon another abused child, who was presumably to take Krueger's place. "Originally, we had this idea about the cyclical nature of child abuse; then we came to the opinion that this is an inappropriate forum to bring up that issue, much less comment on it, so we cut it out," said DeLuca, who claimed that the scene was never intended as a hook for a sequel, despite comments on the set by director Rachel Talalay to the contrary. "There's a place to go with the concept but not necessarily with the character," said Talalay of the possibility of continuing the series. "Someone who can haunt your dreams is wonderful, but does that need to be Freddy?"

Responded DeLuca, "Our interpretation of what Rachel said would be a totally separate series that had something to do with dreams, because the company has always had a predilection for fantasy films. The whole NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET character and myths are gone and over with."

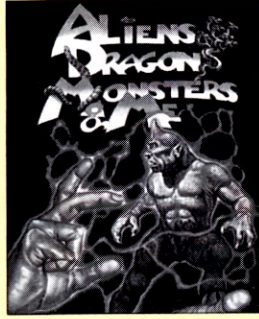
Assuming Freddy is gone for good, what does the man most intimately connected with him for the past seven years see in the future? For now, Robert Englund hardly misses the grueling hours in the makeup chair, but he does foresee a time when he will miss the character. "I certainly don't want to do only horror, but I may do one with Dario Argento down the line or something like that," the actor speculated. "I've always been a working actor and made ends meet, because I know this town very well, but I'd be a liar if I didn't say I'd upped my ante with Freddy."

Still, one cannot help wondering whether the juxta position of two horror hits last September



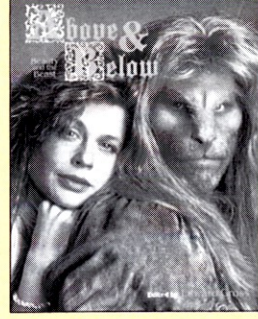
Trailers

Preview trailers run approximately one hour each and feature classic horror films of the past. *Horror/SF I, Horror/SF II, Horror/SF III, Horror/SF IV (Hammer Horror), Horror/SF V (Horrible Honeys), Horror/SF VI (Super Giants), Hitchcock Collection, and American International Pictures (AIP).*



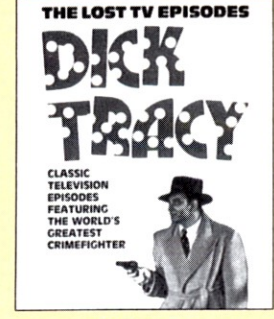
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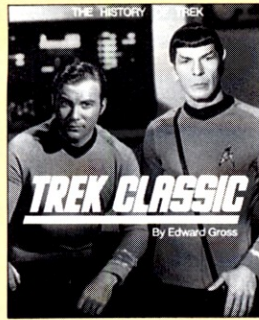
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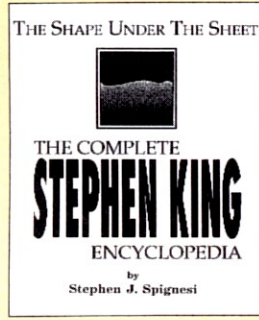
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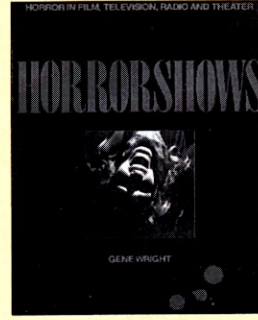
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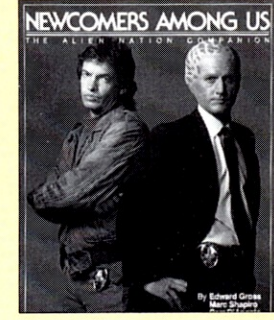
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might suggest a possible sequel to *New Line*. Imagine this: *DEAD AGAIN* star Emma Thompson plays an amnesiac with recurring past-life nightmares of having been slashed by a glove equipped with razor-fingernails. Director Kenneth Branagh plays the detective, assigned to discover her identity, who turns out to be the reincarnation of Freddy Krueger. The title? *FREDDY'S DEAD AGAIN*. □

KENNETH BRANAGH

continued from page 58

DEAD AGAIN is unabashedly about reincarnation, but the word is hardly mentioned because of the emotional and prejudicial baggage it brings to the audience. "When I read the script, I completely suspended my disbelief about reincarnation," Branagh said. "We're bound to acknowledge that we all have a primal fascination with all this that clearly appeals to something quite deep in us." Branagh was surprised to find that his screenwriter, Scott Frank, wasn't a believer. "He regarded this as completely preposterous," said Branagh. "I found it astonishing after I read the script that he didn't believe any of it. I suppose this gave him an objectivity. I guess he wouldn't have been able to sprinkle it with the right kind of humor otherwise."

One of the things Branagh likes about his

own movie is its "elements of showmanship," having actors Andy Garcia and Hanna Schygulla age on screen and especially having a big star performance by Robin Williams in an uncredited, supposedly surprise role. The element of surprise was lost somewhat when Paramount executives decided to feature Williams prominently in TV ads for *DEAD AGAIN*. "It's a proper acting performance that goes for a seedy quality, a dangerous thing," said Branagh. "Yet it's witty too. He approached it very seriously." □

DEAD AGAIN

continued from page 59

as garish as Garcia's).

Only Robin Williams as a dispossessed psychiatrist forced to work as a grocery clerk, and Campbell Scott in an electrifying cameo as Thompson's would-be savior, spark the proceedings with flashes of wit and danger (Williams' performance is uncharacteristically low-keyed but flecked with moments of obscene hilarity).

Like the Coen brothers' *BLOOD SIMPLE* (a similar attempt to both parody and produce a genre thriller), *DEAD AGAIN* is pure contrivance, a Tinker Toy structure grounded in air. The story's lack of romantic/dramatic conviction makes its recourse to so farfetched a prem-

ise as cross-gendered reincarnation even more questionable (and silly) than it already is. Branagh piles on the plot twists with a neophyte's clumsy fervor, but the result is thin, listless, only fitfully intriguing. The '40's flashbacks have a clammy, fustian quality that makes them instant camp (Branagh's Mad Magician look scarcely helps), while the unlucky lovers' contemporary counterparts are sheerest cardboard.

For all its shortcomings, however, *DEAD AGAIN* does possess a poetically charged dimension: the Oedipal spectacle of family dynamics, the ineffable interaction among adults and children whose annihilating effects can cause anguish to succeeding generations. Of course, families breeding monsters are indigenous to the *noir*, horror, and romantic thriller genres as a whole, but to its credit *DEAD AGAIN* respects the Oedipal family's profound, opaque mystery, and almost justifies Branagh's Faustian closing note to *CITIZEN KANE*: the clef-embazoned gate that locks the mansion grounds, evoking the iron barrier that forbids access to Kane's Xanadu, both obstacles testifying to the human heart's ultimate unknowability.

Earnest but uninspired, clever but bloodless, *DEAD AGAIN* conjures Hitchcock only to bury him. □

LETTERS

HE THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE KIRK?

I picked up your December issue, celebrating STAR TREK's 25th anniversary, with interest. Unfortunately, the celebration soon hit a sour note.

On the recent TREK 25th Anniversary TV special, Walter Koenig referred to STAR TREK VI as a "whodunit." Thanks to your magazine, the "who" is apparently no longer a secret. Maybe Valera (or Valeris, as I've seen her referred to elsewhere) is not the sole conspirator. Or perhaps she's a conspirator but not the murderer. In any event, a key element to the movie's "central mystery" has apparently been revealed. I'll have to wait until December 13 to see if there's any suspense left.

Adam Bernard
Southfield, MI 48034

LIKE VALERIS?

In your STAR TREK 25th Anniversary issue [22:3:15] Harve Bennett said the idea of a prequel was ludicrous simply because, from a financial standpoint, the TREK fans (those wonderful people who keep the franchise alive) would not accept it! If Mr. Bennett wanted to expand the range of characters and keep the present classic format alive without depending on

what he calls "the Over-the-Hill Gang," all he had to do was introduce new characters into the series and maintain them in each film. A junior engineer that would someday take Scotty's place. A doctor, perhaps a Vulcan to irritate McCoy, to someday take over the Sick Bay. An officer (be it a new character or one of the regulars like Sulu or Chekov) to move into Kirk's chair.

Instead, all new characters are either killed or ignored: Decker, Ilia, and, most importantly, Saa-rik (very well played by Robin Curtis). Her fate was to be dumped on Vulcan! It's a shame that the "keepers of the franchise" haven't the vision to realize that the way to keep a show alive is inject new characters, not watch them get older and fade away.

Ron Murillo
Pleasant Hill, CA 94523

"THE HOST" NOT A COP-OUT

Our choices for four-star episodes [THE NEXT GENERATION, 22:2:19] would not be the macho Klingon space battle ones you seem to prefer, but the tender, humanist ones such as the stunning and beautifully written episode "The Host," with Gates McFadden's glowing performance

as Dr. Crusher. And I completely disagree there was a compromising "cop-out" with this extraordinary episode. I worked in theater for several years and have a few gay friends who are also avid fans of this series—the ones I spoke to, both male and female, saw no "cop-out" here—quite the opposite. They, and I, were struck by what was a powerful final statement. You weren't listening.

Beverly doesn't say she can't handle it because her lover suddenly became female, but because she's already gone through emotional hell accepting the physical person of her friend/brother Riker as lover and simply can't "keep up" with those kinds of changes. It had nothing to do with Odan being a woman—as the next few moments made more than clear. "Maybe someday our ability to love won't be so limited" is an amazing statement for TV (or anywhere) these days, but is perfectly in keeping with the optimistic, humanist stance of STAR TREK and is not to be lightly dismissed as liberal lip-service.

J.F. Gallo
Hagerstown, MD 21701

[Mark Altman sticks to his rating guns. But I'm with you. "The Host" was the finest NEXT GENERATION I've seen. FSC]

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WHY IS PICARD LIKE A ROCK?

I must comment on Rick Berman's remarks in your October issue [STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION, 22:2:18] "Television has grown up a lot," Berman said, touting the sophisticated sets and the fact that no one wears togas on THE NEXT GENERATION. Gone are those "silly" elements that populated those shows of the '50s and '60s. It's true the special effects of the original STAR TREK weren't as believable as those of today, but the things that made the show so memorable didn't lie in the background, but in the stories and actors who brought it to life.

I really like the concepts THE NEXT GENERATION comes up with, but these character stories need characters to work, and that doesn't seem to be THE NEXT GENERATION's strong point. In fact, these guys make Spock look like Sam Kinison by comparison.

I don't think today's technology has improved the quality of drama. In the '60s we had cardboard backgrounds and people we cared about. In the '90s we have cardboard people, and backgrounds we care about.

Tom Holtkamp
Cincinnati, OH 45205

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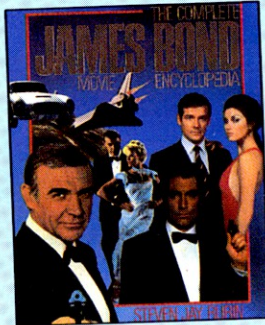
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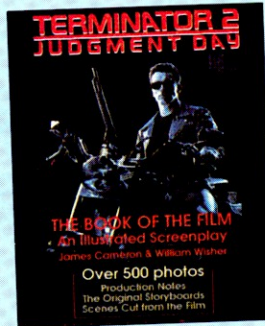
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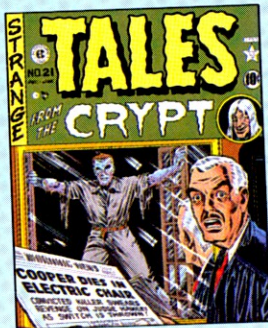
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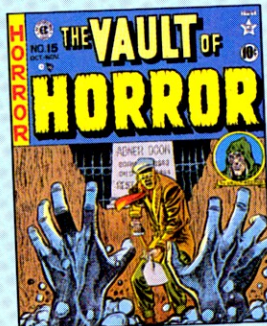
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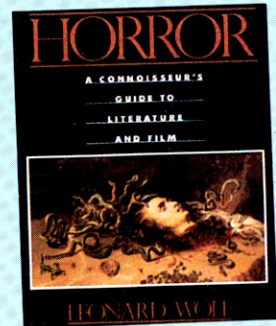
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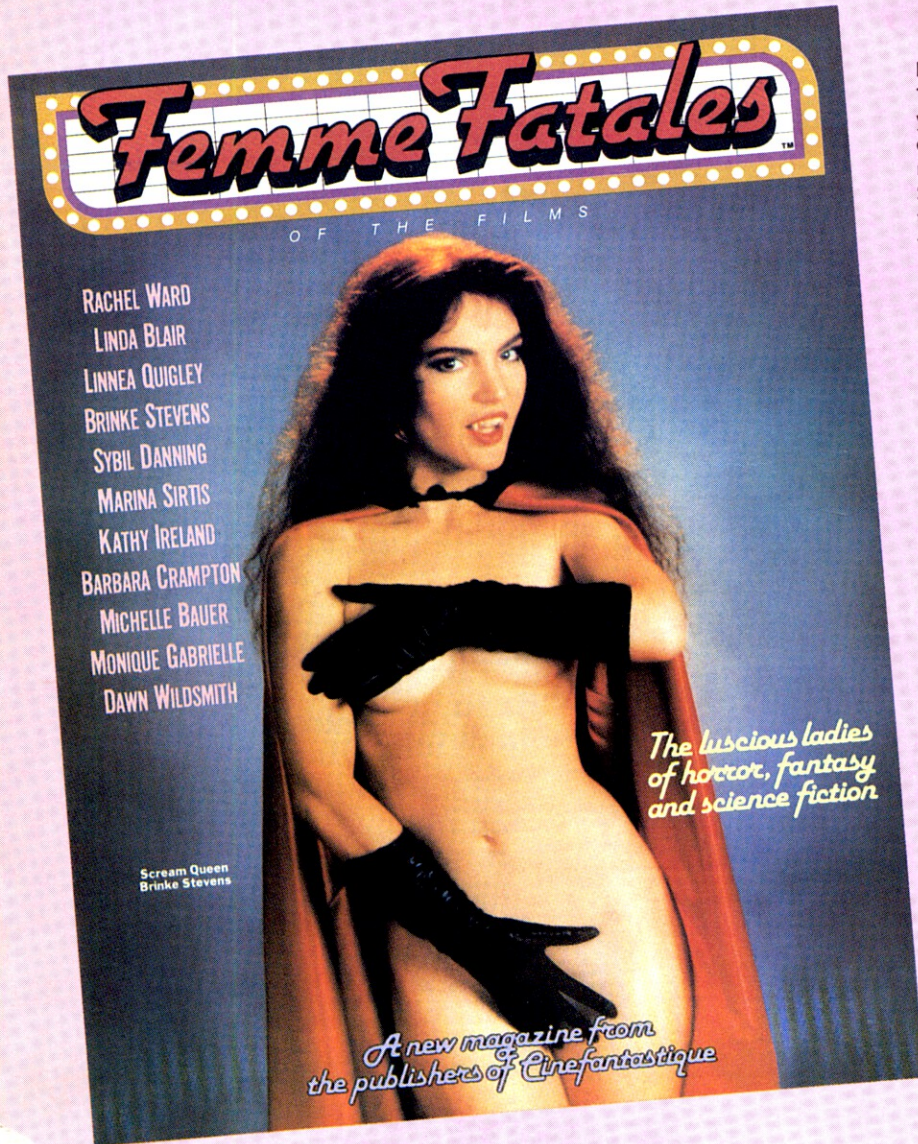
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- Rachel Ward, interviewed on the set of HBO's BLACK MAGIC. The star of THE THORN BIRDS recalls her early genre work in films like NIGHT SCHOOL and THE FINAL TERROR.
- Linnea Quigley, a career profile of the Queen of Scream Queens, the genre's most prolific B-movie star, who's turned her back on the horror grind.
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